Treatise on General Sociology

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BERSERKER

BOOKS

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INTRODUCTION

I. SOCIAL MAN

1. The sexual foundations of the family.

If human beings were born through spontaneous generation, grew up and educated themselves by their own means, and then, eventually, joined with some of their fellow human beings through an act of free will, we could say that the individual constitutes the basic unit of a society that would then be strictly associative in nature. But the reality is very different. The child emerges into a pre-existing social group. They are not born *ex nihilo*, nor even from their father or mother, but from the couple formed by their parents; that is, from the organic union of two complementary sexual instincts.

The family, consisting of the couple and the child, is therefore a social entity that arises from the individual's specific life force. Through our sexual instinct, we are both individuals and members of a family. It is futile to object to this by citing the supposed existence of human hordes that lived, or are said to have lived, in a state of complete sexual promiscuity, without any sense of family order. Even if the phenomenon were indisputable and were in fact the primitive way of life of humanity rather than a degenerative state, the fact would remain that the species has not disappeared and, consequently, that it has reproduced. Only an atrophy of the sexual instinct could have created the opposite situation. Therefore, complete promiscuity would not preclude mating. The family might, in the worst-case scenario, lack continuity. But that would not prevent it from remaining the basic unit of society, since the exercise of the essential function of reproduction would continue to depend on it. The integral horde, as described at length by idealist sociologists, is possible only amongst individuals of the same sex or amongst asexuals. But this would then be an abnormal collective that would no longer deserve the name of society, since it would lack the possibility of perpetuating itself.

Society necessarily presupposes the child, and the child necessarily presupposes the family; that is to say, in the final analysis, the couple, which in turn arises from the distinct structure and sexual drive of its members. If we consider that each of these members likewise originates from a couple, we will have grasped the vital interplay between the individualised sexual instinct and the family unit. Our sexual nature is sufficient to make us social beings.

2. The social nature of man.

We see, then, that the family—even when reduced, for the time being, to a bare minimum—is much more than a union born of the imagination or mutual affection of two individuals. It is in no way to be confused with the contractual forms that characterise its constitution within organised societies. The Fulano family is, to some extent, the product of an agreement between its original members, that is, of a mutual choice that might not have come about. But such an agreement and such a choice would make no sense if each of the spouses had not possessed a sexual instinct that led them, in general, to seek union with a complementary individual. In other words, in the family, only the particular is contractual. The couple, as we have seen, constitutes a natural group of a biological nature, and its extension to the child—without which the family, over time, loses most of its social meaning—is no less natural.

We must point out that the group thus formed stems from a biopsychic tendency which, in each spouse, is evidently individual but which has a social purpose and therefore transcends the person who possesses it. The family order is immanent within us or, more precisely, merges within us with a guiding personal intention which we must recognise, in its specific sexual aspect, as social. There is nothing surprising in this, moreover, since we are a social product, the result of the union of the couple. It will be objected that this is true of all sexual animals, including those unanimously regarded as asocial because they live in isolation from their fellow creatures. The thesis is correct, but the label of 'asocial' applied to beings who periodically seek, even if only for a very brief time, the perfect union of mating seems to us to be an overreach. In reality, the sexual instinct is sufficient to make an animal a social being. But sociability varies with the degree and form of evolution and civilisation of the species, race and individual in question. Man is not the most social of animals, and the polis is not organised as rigidly as the beehive or the anthill, even though a large proportion of the inhabitants of the latter are asexual. It is clear, therefore, that our social instinct surpasses our sexual instinct, all the more so as our tendency towards communal life is not limited to our family, nor even to people of a different sex to our own.

The explanation is clear. Family life, arising directly from our sexual nature, has created a hereditary adaptation to group life—that is to say, a specific social habit. This new instinct, broader in scope than our sexual drive, is an extension of the latter brought about by history and its vital demands for work and defence. But it has not stifled, as happened with the insects mentioned above, our personality, nor, a fortiori, our sexuality. The family and, consequently, our reproductive drive remain the foundation of our social nature. Before our inherited social instinct could influence our behaviour, we experienced the

the influence of the family into which we are born and which raises us. Later, we in turn form a group identical in structure to the one that shaped us. Put another way, the family is the natural foundation of all our social activity and – since the same applies to all our fellow human beings – the 'cell' of the Community, that is to say, both the fundamental group without which society would cease to exist and the smallest of those in which collective life and production manifest themselves; life and production that stem from our sexual instinct.

3. Man's social heritage.

We must, therefore, distinguish between two elements that contribute to the formation of our social instinct. The first, as we have just seen, is a fact of our essential nature. Whether we are sexual beings or not does not depend on our will, nor on the history of our species or our ancestors. We are made to form a couple, and our sexual instinct therefore falls into the category of organic instincts—that is, those which correspond to the structural order of our being and are embodied in a specialised organ. From the couple is born the child, bound to its parents by a biological dependence that leads each of them, quite rightly, to regard the child—despite the personal autonomy it possesses—as an integral part of their being. Paternal and maternal love usually grows through shared life and the intuitive affection that arises from it, but it has a natural foundation infinitely more solid than any other feeling.

It is possible to imagine a social life reduced almost entirely to the family sphere, and indeed there is no shortage of historical examples to this effect. Even in this case, however, the second factor of the social instinct comes into play. Indeed, the life of a couple is not made up exclusively of sexual love but also of the countless relationships imposed by living together, ranging from the most strictly material exchanges of services to the highest shared intellectual pursuits. Thus a habit of living together is created between man and woman, which extends to the child as the child, gaining autonomy, moves biologically away from its parents but at the same time becomes an active member of the family group. Moreover, however isolated and withdrawn the family may be, it is impossible for it to avoid all contact with outsiders. Its very constitution stems from the union of two individuals who, as a rule, belong to different family groups. Secondly, it must provide for itself and cannot always do so in an autarkic manner. Finally, it must defend itself, and solidarity is imposed upon it by necessity. It follows from all this that the family, to varying degrees depending on its way of life, gradually forges a social habit, which constitutes a character acquired through the extension of the biological bonds that unite its members.

Far more consistent than any other, since it stems from our sexual nature, this habit has become a technical instinct, that is to say, one related to the incidental yet enduring aspects of our existence—

In this respect, the social instinct—which was originally free from any sense of obligation—has become ingrained in us through heredity. As soon as a child is able to move, it seeks the company of its peers, and it does so not because it has reasoned out the value of collective play, nor, even less so, because of a freely entered into contract. Human beings inherit a taste for society and, by that very fact, a tendency towards association. This taste and this tendency generally find fertile ground. It is exceptional for a child to be born into a family that has no social contacts other than those arising from its own existence. They usually develop within a complex community that has a tradition—that is, a set of customs passed down from generation to generation and which express its various ways of life. Their education, in the broadest sense of the word—that is to say, not only the lessons they receive from their parents and teachers but also those arising from their daily life within a particular social environment—is steeped in that tradition. The community, whatever it may be, does not produce Robinsons but citizens. To the inherited social instinct is thus added, in the child, the acquired habit, without them even realising it, simply by virtue of living in common, which they are not permitted to refuse.

4. Inequality and hierarchy.

Let us not forget, however, that the child experiences this existence through his family, which acts as a mirror – always somewhat distorting – through which he observes society. The image of society that reaches him, especially in the early years of his life—which shape and condition him most effectively—is entirely imbued with the family, so to speak, and the same was true of his ancestors. The direct and traditional upbringing they receive does not, therefore, give them a vague and indeterminate social instinct; nor is their sexual instinct limited – and above all will not be limited after puberty – to a philanthropic tendency, in the etymological sense of the word. We are born with an instinct to which its biological basis has given a family structure, that is, an order and the values associated with it. This structure accompanies us throughout our upbringing. We encounter it again, without being allowed to alter it, in the new family group we form, just as we observe it in the social ‘cells’ around us. In other words, our social nature implies not only sociability but also a certain number of forms and fundamental principles of community organisation, which are not exactly those of the herd or the hive.

Hence there is a natural social order: one that corresponds to our instinct as it stems from our biopsychic constitution and the history of our species, our race and our lineage, and not as idealist thinkers would have it; that is to say, one that is designed for us as we are, and not for an abstract Man who does not exist. What, then, are the essential demands of our social nature? We could undoubtedly discover them in non-

We can deduce them through psychological analysis. But it is simpler and more reliable to deduce them from observation of the family group, the source of our sexual instinct and the origin of our social instinct proper. Now then, what does the family teach us? First of all, that its members are different and unequal, and that the social relationships between them are founded precisely on this difference and this inequality. In the sexual union that forms the basis of the family group, men and women play distinct functional roles that stem from their respective biopsychic natures. Such inequality is, moreover, even more evident when we consider the relationships between parents and children. It is clear that if the members of the couple were similar and equal—that is, if they belonged to the same sex or to neither—the family unit could not exist. Inequality is, therefore, the natural condition of the marriage contract. Nor is there any need for lengthy arguments to make it clear that it is this inequality which governs the relationships between parents and children. Maurras very aptly highlighted the fundamental role of 'protective inequality', without which the little one would not see the light of day and, even if he did, would survive for only a few moments.

The first principle of the natural social order is, therefore, inequality. The second follows from the first: amongst unequal beings, united by a shared social life and performing within the group functions that correspond to their respective natures, a hierarchy is necessarily established. By virtue of his bio-psychic constitution, man is made to command and woman to obey. By virtue of their more advanced development, both are destined to guide the child. The social instinct that arises from the family is thus naturally imbued with the two principles of inequality and hierarchy that we have just defined as a consequence of our very being. If it is to fulfil its role, society must organise itself according to the instinctive reality of its members. Inequality and hierarchy are, therefore, the fundamental norms of the natural social order.

5. Service and protection.

These rules are not, however, sufficient to define our community life. They apply, in fact, to a prison as much as to a family, even though the organisation of these two types of communities is extremely different. Let us therefore consider what meaning they take on within the basic group on which our social instinct depends. We know that the members of a couple are united by a contract. We must clarify here that this is not a commercial agreement whose clauses strictly define the obligations of each party, but rather a simple mutual choice that limits the spouses' exercise of their sexual instinct. Relations between men and women are thus founded, first and foremost, on a biological exchange of services, each being indispensable to the other in order to achieve the fullness of their personal lives. Inequality and hierarchy, far from representing principles of coercion, are, on the contrary, the factors of a functional collaboration that excludes all calculation. To ask which of the spouses

contributes more to the sexual union is meaningless. Each plays the role assigned by their nature.

When we consider the relationship between parents and children, the importance of the concept of service within the family becomes even more apparent, since there is not even a question of reciprocity. The child receives without giving anything in return. He owes his parents the creation and preservation of his life. The help that is indispensable to him is provided by his parents freely, in an act of pure love and without even a hope of recompense, as Maurras so aptly observed. Moreover, there is nothing in such an attitude that might lead us to think of charity. Unless we are dealing with monsters, the service rendered to the child by its parents does not present itself to them as an external obligation but as a natural impulse arising from biological parenthood. The newborn 'is part' of its parents, and all the more closely so the less developed its autonomy is—that is to say, the greater the inequality.

Service is, therefore, the law that governs the totality of relationships within the basic natural group. Here we are faced with an important observation, since it shows us that the family is organised in an organic rather than a contractual manner, despite the pact that enshrines—but does not create—the union of the spouses. This is hardly surprising, since the couple, at least at the height of their unifying tension, behaves as a single organism; furthermore, the child is composed of substances of paternal and maternal origin, though it transcends them in the personal synthesis it achieves. Each of the three factors of the healthy family is therefore linked to the others by biopsychic relationships deriving from their natural function. The strongest affords protection to the weakest, as if guided by a familial intention that supplants their personal intention. And indeed it is. But the collective purpose of the group does not impose itself as an external force. It merges with a guiding intention that is both personal and social. We are a family being precisely because our sexual nature implies the group of which we form part but which transcends us. Our social instinct is constituted around this almost organic intention, which merges with our own vital impulse and inherits its modes. Service and protection constitute the natural consequences of the inequality and hierarchy of the family group. We find them once again as fundamental characteristics of the broader trend into which, over the centuries, the intention that drives us—by virtue of our very structure—to seek the affirmation of our self in union with another being of the complementary sex has evolved.

6. Functional specialisation in humans.

Family life involves even more. Indeed, the inequality and hierarchy governing relations between the various members of the biosocial group are not based on a qualitative difference between beings identical in structure but, on the contrary, on a functional difference arising from the particular biopsychic constitution of the sexes and from parentage, which creates a natural bond of dependence—

Our social instinct carries within it a principle of organic specialisation that we cannot choose to accept or reject. Family life reinforces this tendency towards differentiation through the habit that arises, from early childhood, from the need for a division of labour within the group. It is not fantasy or convenience that imposes their respective roles on men, women and children, but rather the capacity of each individual. Our instinctive predisposition towards social specialisation is thus reinforced by the reality of our family life, particularly during childhood, when we possess a keener capacity for assimilation and adaptation than in later stages of life.

It is not only within our own families, however, that we find ourselves living in a functionally hierarchical and differentiated society. All human communities, albeit to varying degrees depending on their level of development, take gender and age into account when allocating social roles. The most advanced among them also base their structure on the hereditary specialisation of families and social classes or castes. Now, this general fact of functional differentiation is not exclusive to our generation. It has manifested itself, in varying forms and degrees, ever since the human species has existed. Our social instinct, therefore, is imbued with the idea of specialisation even before it is shaped by the institutions of the community within which we will live. Moreover: not only are we born personally differentiated by our age and sex, and not only do we bring with us a social instinct that is already defined, but we also possess traits that stem from the hereditary specialisation of the family generations from which we have emerged; that is to say, from the functional instincts more or less gradually forged through the application of successive individuals of the same lineage to a specific task.

A man is shaped by the life he leads, the work he does and the responsibilities he shoulders. Unless he is degenerate, the heir to a long line of leaders is different, both physically and morally, from the descendant of a lineage of subordinates. The son and grandson of proletarians is distinguished, from the moment of his birth, from the son and grandson of peasants. Therefore, our social instinct is not merely a predisposition towards collective life. We are defined, to some extent, by the role that will be – or, at least, ought to be – ours in the Community. A liberal society that refuses to take such hereditary specialisation into account acts like the owner of a stud farm who denies any functional difference between thoroughbreds and Percherons, imposes identical training on both, and then leaves them free to choose between the racecourse and the plough. It is evident that what constitutes the value of the thoroughbred, as well as that of the Percheron, is precisely hereditary specialisation and the functional capacity that stems from it. The same applies to man. We are not merely a unit in a herd, but a distinct member of an organic society, in which each individual plays a specialised role. Our social instinct and the inherited functional tendencies that define and guide it predestine us to occupy a certain place in the Community, just as our sexual instinct imposes a certain place upon us within the family group. Thus

Our nature shapes society, but society in turn shapes our nature, in a constant interplay that gives society its human character and makes man a fully social being.

7. Team spirit.

The word 'society' that we have just used is a term whose generality and vagueness render it ambiguous. There is, in fact, no such thing as a 'human society' whose constituent elements are individuals or families, but only natural groups and contractual associations which, by joining together, form more or less autonomous communities. To say that man is a social animal means that he possesses an instinct which demands and enables his integration into a collective life whose forms are dictated by nature and history. We may well feel a certain sympathy for any of our fellow human beings simply because they are human beings, but such a feeling does not differ essentially from that which we feel for a dog. It is in no way to be confused with the functional bonds that unite us with the other members of the natural groups and the Community of which we form part. Necessity and self-interest are, as a rule, far stronger than sentiment, and it is upon these that our true social cooperation is founded. This does not, of course, prevent sympathy from arising—and indeed it usually does arise—from living together and the constant exchange of services.

On the other hand, one should not interpret the terms 'necessity' and 'interest' in too narrow a sense. Social necessity is not an external compulsion comparable to that which weighs upon a prisoner, but rather the inner drive of instinct that demands to be satisfied. The interest that leads us to accept and seek collective life is not a principle of exploitation of the group and the Community by the individual, but merely an awareness of our nature and, therefore, of the importance, from our personal point of view, of the social reality to which we are subject. Now then: to satisfy our social instinct, we must accept the frameworks that the groups and the Community within which we live constitute for us; whether this involves a situation imposed by our birth – we cannot choose our family or our race – whether circumstances require us to accept a state of affairs – our nation, our homeland – or whether it suits us to join associations such as, for example, an academy or a club.

Our social instinct predestines us to play a more or less specific role within groups of a more or less defined structure. Our heritage binds us to a certain social environment, but not to any particular groups or associations. Thus, through the education we receive and the personal history we create, a genuine individualisation of our instinct takes place; this instinct, which tends towards living in society, is transformed into what is called the group spirit, that is to say, it merges with the intention of the whole with which we are in solidarity. It is this fusion that explains why we are able to sacrifice ourselves for the Community

of which we form a part, even if there is an apparent contradiction here with our personal life force. Our guiding intention, which is, as we have already seen, of a social nature, bears the stamp of the collective, which shapes it according to what it is. Group spirit is a differentiation, through habit, of our social instinct. It is therefore legitimate to speak of the soul of a people or the guiding intention of a community, provided that we do not turn the immanent reality expressed by these words into hypostases akin to the intelligence of the engineer who arranges the assembly of a machine's parts and compels them to function together. What we might call the vital impetus of the group is nothing other than the synthetic result of the vital impulses of its members, which are social by nature, specialised by instinct and differentiated by upbringing.

8. Social pressure.

That does not mean it is any less true that the group spirit exerts itself upon our minds and guides our actions, at least to some extent. We depend on our social environment just as much as on our cosmic environment, and for exactly the same reasons: it shapes us, and we need it. But at the same time, and far more so than the cosmic environment – which receives the minimal modifications we impose on it but does not need them at all – society, which is human, depends on our existence and our actions. It modifies our social instinct, but that social instinct is the indispensable factor in its being and its evolution. When we say that the vital impetus of the group is the synthesis of the guiding personal intentions of its members, this should not, therefore, be understood as reducing to a sum of individual interests. Firstly, because a synthesis is not a sum but, on the contrary, an overcoming of forces in more or less marked conflict. Secondly, because personal interest is not merely particular, but at the same time particular, social by nature and socialised by habit. Finally, because the natural groups and the Community into which we are incorporated from birth already exist and possess a duration which our subsequent intervention will undoubtedly modify, but which at the same time weighs upon our heritage and our upbringing.

The fundamental purpose of the Community is established before us before we are in a position to influence it. Its historical continuity is not interrupted by our arrival; moreover, we are already its product, since we are born into a family group and carry within our genes the legacy of a more or less lengthy process of social differentiation. Our predestination to form part of this or that Community and to perform a certain function within it stems from the pressure exerted upon us by the social environment through our parents and all our ancestors, that is to say, even before our conception. We are, therefore, the emanation and expression of a historical reality, prior to us, which has shaped our personal intentions and which determines us to the extent of the differentiation it has imposed upon us. On the other hand, the social environment in which we develop is not exactly the same as that which shaped the lineage from which we were born. Groups and communities evolve, and thus transform themselves in accordance with the

the course of its existence. We find ourselves in a situation quite different from that of a bee, which is born fully adapted to an unchanging social order that provides the perfect framework for its fulfilment. We must adapt to an environment that is more or less different from the one for which we were destined. Historical intent is always one generation ahead of the newborn, and the society it shapes and directs therefore exerts pressure upon us that tends to assimilate us into it and to transform the 'past' social being that we are into a 'present' social being.

On the other hand, our personal intention, despite its social nature, is not to be confused with the historical intention of the Community, which is a synthesis of groups, each of which evolves through the synthesis of a multitude of individual impulses. It is worth noting that the Community is not perfectly embodied in us, as the hive is in the bee, but rather that our social instinct must acquire the changing forms of collective life, forms which it alone helps to create. On the one hand, we are hereditarily adapted to social forms that have partly disappeared; on the other hand, we constitute only one of the individual components of the communal intention. By our very nature, we need a social framework, but the one in which we must live cannot fully satisfy us. We must therefore adapt to it or adapt it; that is to say: yield to its pressure and thus become the malleable raw material of a historical purpose in whose direction we renounce participation, or resist it, without thereby refusing the social role that our nature assigns us, which would be tantamount to denying a fundamental part of our being. It is evident that, in the social order too, the more we modify our environment, the less we allow ourselves to be transformed by it. It is also clear that our action upon society will be the work of our entire personality and not merely of our social instinct.

9. Personal resistance to social pressure.

Psychology teaches us that our existence is made up of a complex of tendencies unified by our guiding intention. Our social instinct is one such tendency. It plays a more or less significant role in the whole, depending on the nature of our personality. But under no circumstances is it possible to regard the human being as a mere cog in a social mechanism. If this were the case, our evolution could indeed be explained by the social interactions to which we are, necessarily, subject. But this is not the case. We are born into a family and live within various groups that constitute the building blocks of a community. This is only natural, since our social instinct, which is fundamentally sexual, demands it. But the pressure exerted upon us by this society of which we form part does not direct us as an inert body, nor as organic intelligence does with physical-chemical matter and its forces. Our guiding intention tends to actualise our potentialities in order to realise, as fully as possible, our personality

in its entirety. This realisation implies a social framework, but only as a necessary condition for our continued existence.

In other words, the social instinct operates within us as a personal tendency, and not as a 'fifth column' that has taken control of our being and uses it to serve an end alien to our own evolution. Groups and the community do not, therefore, encounter a sort of Platonic matter ready to passively receive their influence, but, on the contrary, an autonomous entity that is already social, albeit in its own way, and entirely willing to accept the social framework it demands, provided that it corresponds to its own needs, that is to say, to its own aspirations. Now, this never happens. Firstly, because the society that exerts pressure upon us is a synthetic construct, made up of social instincts formed in ways that differ more or less from our own. Secondly, because its endeavour is exclusively social and therefore tends to realise in us only those possibilities that are useful to it. Since not our entire being is oriented towards the social—or, to put it another way, since we are neither bees nor ants—the pressure of groups and of the Community encounters on our part a twofold resistance, both social and anti-social. On the one hand, we demand that our social framework respond to needs arising from our instinctive nature and our reasoning regarding the structure of society. From this perspective, the present state of the Community satisfies us only when it resembles the past state, that is, when the conditions of historical continuity have not undergone significant changes. Otherwise, we seek, more or less rationally, a solution to the problems that arise and oppose, in the name of the necessary social order, the existing social state of affairs. This means that we resist social pressure in those forms that seem to us, rightly or wrongly, to be socially unsatisfactory. But, on the other hand, we demand that the groups and the Community within which we live also respond to the needs arising from our personal autonomy. This would only be fully possible if our person constituted a social group in and of itself, as is the case, to some extent, with lower animals of asexual reproduction. Human society, by the very fact of its supra-individual nature, does not yield to our guiding intention but, on the contrary, seeks to subjugate it and, of course, to reduce our autonomy by constraining us to act in its own interest rather than in our own.

Between the community and the individual there is, therefore, both an interdependence and an essential contradiction. We resist social pressure, but we cannot do without society. We oppose the group's modes of existence, and even the direction of its historical dynamism, not to destroy a framework that is indispensable to us, but to establish between it and ourselves a harmony which, moreover, constitutes the natural social order.

10. The personal will to social power.

Hence, the attitude of the passive individual who accepts all social impositions is unnatural, in that it undermines the autonomy that rightfully belongs to the biopsychic system constituting the individual. The anarchist's attitude is no less so, since it tends to destroy the indispensable social framework of a personality that refuses to acknowledge the dependence necessary for its very existence. If a human community were made up solely of 'receptives'—that is, of an inert mass devoid of any hierarchical or creative drive—it would stagnate at the lowest level of collective life and tend to become a herd. If it were composed solely of anarchists, it would vanish into chaos.

Society therefore requires, in order to evolve, the individual action of at least some of its members, but an action that blends into the historical dynamism of groups and the Community. If we avoid the two pathological pitfalls of social conformism, which betrays personal weakness, and of anarchism, a consequence of the atrophy or depravation of one of the fundamental instincts inherent in our nature, only two paths remain open to us: withdrawal into ourselves or into a small, chosen social group – a convent or a family – and the path that allows us to overcome the individual-society opposition in an endeavour that identifies us with our social milieu whilst at the same time exalting our personality. The former is evidently reserved for certain elite individuals who find within themselves the indispensable compensations for a life that is, to a greater or lesser degree, asocial and, therefore, abnormal. This does not make it any less detrimental as regards the evolution of the Community. The second, on the contrary, corresponds fully to our entire nature. It implies our acceptance of the dialectical movement that sets us against society, but also its transfiguration. We strive to merge with our social environment, not by yielding to its demands nor by merely supporting what in it satisfies us, but by modifying it in such a way that it satisfies us without reservation. It goes without saying that such identification is unattainable and that this is necessary. It would, in fact, imply on our part an absolute dominion over society. But this endeavour results in a voluntary incorporation of our personal existence into the historical existence of the Community.

Despite the seemingly paradoxical nature of this proposition, we can state with complete accuracy that whilst our identification with the social environment cannot be achieved as the ultimate goal of our efforts, it is the immediate result of those very efforts; for it is only by accepting the realities of that environment that we can influence the communities of which we form part and adapt to them to some extent. We face society, not as an enemy that seeks our destruction and which we seek to destroy, but as an opponent in a sporting contest: without it, no real personal fulfilment is possible; but that very fulfilment demands that we oppose it and try to bend it to our will, which implies that we accept its existence and adapt to its game to the extent that we fail to impose—

We make it our own. We embody within ourselves the historical purpose of the Community and seek to guide it in accordance with our own conception of its future. In doing so, we assert ourselves as autonomous beings of a social nature.

Political action is, therefore, the culmination of a will to power that is only fully personal if it expresses the social instinct that is an integral part of our being. Nietzsche's Übermensch, who scorns the society into which he was born and without which, however much he may think otherwise, he could not live, should be contrasted with the leader integrated into the group or community he embodies and leads, the hero who asserts himself through social sacrifice, and the revolutionary who seeks to restore to a decadent society the meaning of its history. Whatever their position in the hierarchy, these complete men embody within themselves the synthesis of the personal and the social.

11. Social struggle and solidarity

Such a synthesis, of course, is far from happening automatically. There are no machines for selecting leaders. Competitive examinations only consider the intellectual aspect of the individual taking them and neglect precisely their leadership aptitudes. *Tests* yield nothing but random and fragmentary results which, in any case, need to be interpreted. Only the inheritance of office takes account of biopsychic realities but, unfortunately, it has ever less influence on social life and, moreover, does not meet all the requirements of the hierarchical order, since it is itself founded on the non-hereditary access to power of the founder of the lineage. Even in the best-organised societies, the selection of leaders therefore remains a problem. On the other hand, leaders—whether individuals, groups or social strata—find their power challenged by those hierarchically below them who, rightly or wrongly, seek to wrest it from them.

Except, therefore, in the case of hereditary offices, social power must be won. And once secured through blood or struggle, it must be defended. Moreover, this is but one aspect of the complex antagonisms that pit the individual against the group to which he belongs; the group against the community that encompasses and dominates it; and individuals against one another, and groups against one another. Any society, if we consider it from the perspective of a certain neo-Darwinism or, more simply, in the light of Plautus's famous maxim made famous by Hobbes, will appear to us as a web of rivalries expressed more or less brutally depending on the level of civilisation. The struggle for social power will be a mere aspect of the struggle for life, and this will constitute the fundamental law of the evolution of societies.

However, if such an interpretation were correct, there would be no groups or communities, but merely gangs of prisoners subject to the law of the jungle, both within themselves and amongst themselves. Moreover, the family would have no chance of survival, since the child has no means of defence and would succumb, helpless, to the law of the jungle.

Right. However, that is not how things work. The sexual instinct, which is already social, forms and preserves the family, and the social instinct proper, which springs from it, gives society the structure we know. Social struggle is real, but it is dominated by the social solidarity that stems from our nature and without which there would be no groups or communities; without which, consequently, the individual could not fulfil himself, assuming he had been born.

Social antagonisms are indeed the factors underlying social continuity. Yet simply acknowledging this is enough to highlight the primacy of continuity over its constituent factors. In other words, social evolution is dialectical in nature and proceeds through the overcoming of the complex struggles that unfold within it. It is, therefore, indisputable that a principle of unity prevails over the principle of struggle. Groups and communities exist only to the extent that the solidarity of their members is stronger than their divisive antagonisms. The law of mutual aid is as natural as the law of struggle, and more powerful than it. But neither can exclude the other, and a purely unitary human society is no more conceivable than a wholly anarchic community. Even the beehive experiences internal antagonisms that are necessary for its evolution, such as that which leads to the elimination of males that are no longer useful. Individual rivalries and personal resistance to social pressure stem from our inalienable autonomy. The mutual opposition of groups and their defence against communal authority arise from their organic existence and, consequently, from their own intentional activity. But the Community, too, possesses a guiding purpose and a duration. Hence its legitimate dominance over the groups that constitute it and which it unites through the tendency towards solidarity, which leads us to accept and seek a social framework as broad and as solid as possible, within which we find the indispensable support for our self-assertion.

12. The individual's submission to society

The conflict that pits us against social groups, intermediate communities and the Community of which we form part—whether it manifests itself as temporary divergences of interest in the broadest sense of the word, or as a deeper and seemingly constant contradiction—is, therefore, in itself, nothing out of the ordinary. But the overall solution to the problem is provided by our very nature. Indeed, we are not social beings merely because we prefer collective life to solitary existence and therefore seek contact with our fellow human beings. We have already seen that, on our part, this is not a mere preference but an essential requirement. We are born into a social group, and from this point of view we do not necessarily differ from so-called asocial animals. But we also have a need for the family, or for a social substitute for the family, in order to survive. Moreover, a purely solitary life, assuming it were conceivable, would allow us only an incomplete development, since the social instinct we carry within us and which, first and

To fulfil their biopsychic basis—the sexual instinct—requires a relationship with at least one other human being. Social life, therefore, is not a luxury, nor indeed a mere imposition of circumstance, but a personal necessity. Put another way, the individual-society conflict does not truly pit two entities against one another that are in contact but essentially distinct – as is the case with a conflict between two individuals – but rather two partially contradictory facets of our personal nature. It is, therefore, identical to the antagonisms that manifest themselves in the course of our lives. Now then: the social instinct is not merely one tendency among others, but the supra-personal condition of our existence and our fulfilment; hence, of our autonomy. That is to say, our opposition to society is legitimate only to the extent that it raises us up as revolutionaries against an accidental form of the group or the Community—one which we judge to be pathological—but not against its nature.

The issue of the individual's submission to society is generally misrepresented. We are not only part of a whole, but also of a whole that is indispensable to us, that permeates us, and whose origin lies within us. We depend on our social environment just as we depend on our cosmic environment. We can therefore say, as we do of a climate, that a particular political regime does not suit us, and we have the logical right to seek its change. But it would be just as absurd to denounce the social fact itself as it would be to denounce the air we breathe. Now then: the social fact implies a fundamental structure, an order and a hierarchy. The State is a necessary element of these facts. We are therefore, by nature, subject not only to the principle of society but also to its conditions of existence and, consequently, to the State which embodies the guiding intention of the Community or, more precisely, to the State insofar as it embodies it, that is to say, insofar as it performs its functions and remains faithful to its mission. Let us note this here: the individual could not be subordinated to a general interest that were nothing more than a sum of particular interests, since it is not a question of quantity but of value, a single man being capable of being worth, personally and even socially, much more than the whole of his contemporaries; nor could he be subordinated to the so-called General Will, which, despite its name, expresses only the demands of a fraction of the social body. He is subject only to the historical intention that guides social duration and thus encompasses the past and the future as well as the present, since it is this intention that gives the Community its existence and its supra-individual value. It is scarcely necessary to add that the 'personalist' thesis, according to which the individual is subject to society but the latter is subordinate to a supposed spiritual person, has no meaning whatsoever. Not only does it deny the essential unity of the human being, but it also attributes to social duration a multi-personal purpose that would prevent it from overcoming antagonisms which it would, on the contrary, have to accept.

13. Social life and freedom

We cannot stress enough that society is neither an oppressive entity nor a tyrant imposing its law upon us. By submitting to the historical purpose of the Community to which he belongs, the individual is merely accepting the consequences of his own nature. When anarchists rebel in the name of individual freedom against social law, they fail to realise that they are undermining a fundamental condition of personal being and development. When liberals—those shameful and inconsistent anarchists—make this very freedom the criterion of value for social organisation, they fail to realise that they are putting the cart before the horse and reasoning as if society were the product of individual will and not, as we have already established, the individual the product of the guiding intentions of the group and the Community from which he or she was born. The first condition of freedom is existence, and we exist only through society.

This does not mean that we should deny the antagonisms that arise between human beings and their social context. On the contrary, we know that they stem from two different aspects of our nature. But under no circumstances should these antagonisms be transformed into a fundamental contradiction, nor, even less so, reduced in the interests of an individual freedom that has no reality except to the extent that man is a social being. Our autonomy only makes sense within the framework of the environment on which we depend. It cannot, therefore, be opposed to this environment without tending towards absolute independence, that is to say, the deification of the individual, which clearly does not correspond to what we are and can only end in failure. We are free only to the extent that we realise our inherited potential in relation to our environment, which imposes upon us a choice necessary for our very survival. Now, by the very fact that these potentials are inherited, they are social. And, moreover, society constitutes a fundamental feature of our environment. Therefore, there is no escape: individual freedom is social from every point of view.

This does not mean that we are mere pawns subject to the whims and fantasies of the collective will. Whilst our freedom is social, the historical will is human: it is embodied in us and manifested through us, to varying degrees depending on our social standing—that is to say, on our role and our hierarchical position. Undoubtedly, the leader is freer than the subordinate. On the surface, he does not depend on the Community, since he imposes his own will upon it. But in reality, unless he is an anti-social individual who then deserves the name of usurper, that will is nothing other than the more or less satisfactory expression of the guiding intention of the Community. We can therefore say just as accurately that the leader is the freest human being as that he is the most dependent. It follows that we are all the freer the more we integrate into our environment and identify with it; that is, the better we achieve the personal synthesis of the individualistic and socialist tendencies, in the true sense of the word, which we possess in equal measure. Both in the man who

fully integrates into groups, intermediate communities and the Community of which he is a part, at whatever level of the hierarchy he may find himself; just as in the case of one who opposes a regime he deems unsatisfactory and seeks to restore true order—at least as he conceives it—the social and the individual merge in total harmony. These are, of course, extreme cases. For such a synthesis is not achieved without difficulty or effort. But in that effort we make to overcome our internal antagonisms and their external repercussions, our personal freedom is exercised in the pursuit of our fulfilment.

14. Man, the agent of social continuity

We have stated above that the more we integrate into our environment, the freer we become. Such a statement calls for a significant caveat. Indeed, the 'bee-individual', if we may use that expression—the individual who occupies a place in society that satisfies him, who accepts the laws of his environment without effort or constraint, and who is even prepared to die for the Community of which he is a member—such an individual is undoubtedly free, since he obeys his nature, which is social to almost the same degree as that of the insect. But its freedom corresponds to an inferior personality, whose autonomy is reduced to the minimum compatible with its existence as an individualised being. Does this compel us to revisit our previous analysis and note a fundamental antinomy between our personal autonomy—that is to say, here, our resistance to the pressure of the social environment—and our integration into that environment? We would have to answer in the affirmative if the historical intention of the Community consisted of a rigid guideline laid down once and for all, which we were required either to follow or to reject. Indeed, we would then face the dilemma of submitting to social norms, like the bee, or rebelling against them, at least to the extent permitted by our individual development. Consequently, only the 'bee-man' and the asocial—that is to say, the mediocre and the abnormal—would find here a choice that would compel them to deny an essential part of themselves. But the historical intention guiding social evolution is no more comparable to a railway track than our personal intention. Far from being 'pre-fabricated', it consists of a mere projection into the present and future of the communal being as constructed by the past. Put another way, it is limited to setting out the conditions, established by history, of social duration. But the movement of that duration proceeds from the social beings who constitute the basic groups and, indirectly, the Community. Moreover: its precise direction is not determined by historical intention, but created in accordance with that intention, with a certain margin of freedom, by individuals.

It is precisely at this crucial point that the social sphere differs from the biological. The organism shapes its own destiny. The community sees its destiny shaped by its members. If all these members belong to the 'individual-bee' type, their instinctive conformity will lead them to accept the existing norms without any attempt to alter them. But since man's social instinct cannot reach the level of

Given the mediocrity found among insects—which acts as a factor of stagnation—the community of mediocrities will soon degenerate and disappear. Every human society, precisely because it is human, demands that its historical purpose be embodied in an aristocracy capable of grasping and interpreting it in accordance with the current conditions of its evolution; that is to say, of acting as the agent of the community's continuity. The bee-like individual can therefore only realise his mediocre personal harmony in an almost perfect integration with his social milieu if other individuals, conscious of their mission, act within that milieu and impose upon the conformist mass the direction that is indispensable to it. The leader, then, is also free, but with a freedom entirely different from that of the passive being, whose very passivity allows him to fit into his social framework without altering it. The leader's freedom corresponds to a superior personality whose autonomy is powerfully affirmed in his social endeavour and who resists communal pressure without opposing the Community, becoming, on the contrary, the instrument of its continuity. There are, therefore, two ways of being free through integration into the social milieu: that of the 'slave', whose autonomy is weak, and that of the 'master', who expresses his powerful individual autonomy through his action on the historical continuity of society.

15. The social self

However, there are no 'pure slaves', since the individual autonomy of the mediocre, and even of the brute, is never entirely annihilated; nor are there 'pure masters', since we are always somewhat sensitive to the pressure of our social environment and, moreover, never completely merge with the Community upon which we impose our will. Between the theoretical 'slave', with his individuality exclusively social in obedience, and the theoretical 'master', with his individuality exclusively social in command, we find the whole range of real men, whose inner unity—both individual and social, yet not without friction—is achieved with difficulty through the synthesis of antagonistic tendencies or is distorted in compromise. The so-called 'bee-individual' does not become fully socialised by accepting his environment. The leader who imposes his will on the social whole is far from individualising it entirely. We are immersed in a shifting mass of social data on which we exert influence to a greater or lesser degree – if only by virtue of our very existence – and which influences us to a greater or lesser degree. The most individualised person may well react violently under social pressure and recoil in horror from the offers of assimilation made to them, but that very reaction is proof of the powerful effect of the social on the individual. Moreover, it is natural and inevitable that this should happen, since we possess a social instinct that we can sometimes stifle to a certain extent but never destroy, and which transforms us into receivers of the social images that are ceaselessly presented to our minds.

By this we mean that, together with society, we form a homogeneous whole within which exchanges between its elements are the norm. We

we constantly form images of social origin which find in us the appropriate resonance and become incorporated into our existence. If we accept them, whether out of sympathy or passivity, such repeated images form in us habits and beliefs that weigh ever more heavily upon our self. The leader moulds them in his own image and uses them as means of penetrating society and as instruments of action upon the Community. The individual-bee, on the other hand, is shaped by them. But in both cases a social self is constituted, forged by the crystallisation around the social instinct (itself the product of similar operations, at the origin of which we find the sexual instinct) of images produced by collective life and which have in common only their non-individual character. They range from the simple, indifferent gaze of an unknown passer-by to the intoxicating sound of a crowd's cheers.

As the very words we have just used suggest, and in accordance with the general law governing everything that becomes part of our inner flow, these images evoke emotions and feelings within us that express our stance towards them and, consequently, also carry social significance. To these are added the abstract images that correspond to the norms of community life. And we cannot forget the images of various kinds that are imposed upon us, ready-made, by tradition, in the broadest sense of the word, particularly those of language. In short, our social action, and especially the exercise of our profession, forms within us dynamics that our memory records. Our social self, therefore, is abundantly and ceaselessly nourished by new elements that add an experiential conditioning to the hereditary conditioning of our sexual instinct. In the weak, this social self takes on such importance that it submerges the individual self and reduces it to a mere supporting role. In the leader, on the contrary, it constitutes an enrichment of the autonomous personality, which accepts these elements in order to assert itself in all its fullness. In both cases, the social is a fundamental factor of our being and our action.

16. The holistic man.

This final analysis could give rise to a particularly serious misunderstanding. We have, in fact, shown how social contributions crystallise around our sexual instinct, which is already genetically expanded. Given that we have, moreover, contrasted this social self with the individual self, there might be a temptation to regard it as a special layer of our being, endowed with a certain autonomy of movement and action and obeying its own purpose. We would thus fall into a new dualism. We would end up distinguishing within man a juxtaposed individual personality and a social personality, between which ever-renewed conflicts would arise and be resolved, in a more or less satisfactory manner. It would then be a short step to attributing different, if not opposing, values to these two 'selves'. It is therefore essential to go back and re-examine the question from its foundations.

The sexual instinct is not localised in the organs through which it is expressed; on the contrary, these organs are the specialised manifestation of a general tendency inherent in our being. Whether directly or through these organs, the organic and psychic layers of our existence are imbued with sexuality. When we say that social images crystallise around our sexual instinct, this does not in any way mean that they constitute with it an isolated block or a particular layer of our self – let alone a second self – but simply that they attach themselves to it and socialise it where it is found, that is to say, indissolubly incorporated into our entire personality. The phenomenon is comparable to the dyeing of a coloured fabric: it is not a matter of applying a coat of paint, but of the penetration of a substance that combines with the original colour to produce a new shade that is impossible to pinpoint. But if the process is not carried out properly, the previous colouring will still dominate in places. The same applies to our self, which is never entirely socialised. It defends itself against the external influence that presses upon it and, from time to time, manages to free itself from it to some extent. The individual self and the social self are not, therefore, two separate realities. It is the individual self that becomes social, or rather, more social, without thereby losing its original nature. The unity of man is not broken by a complexity which, on the contrary, constitutes the factor of dialectical movement without which we would not evolve. The individual and the social are two essential elements of our personal synthesis, that is to say, two dimensions, of overcome antagonisms, of the integral man.

II. SOCIOLOGY

17. The social fact:

We saw in the previous chapter that human beings are, by their origin and nature, social beings who need to live alongside their fellow human beings. Hence, their existence normally unfolds – and in their early years always – within a social group amongst whose members variable relationships are established. When the scope of collective life extends beyond the confines of the family group, relationships emerge between social groups and also between individuals and social groups. It is these relationships between social entities, whether individual or collective, that we call social phenomena, regardless of their nature, circumstances and intensity.

A social fact is, therefore, a collective phenomenon, even when it originates from an individual attitude or brings about physical or mental changes in individuals who, whether or not they participate in it, suffer its consequences. Its possible psychological causes and effects may be identified, but it must first be understood in its objective reality. From this latter perspective, the social fact does not differ from

the other scientific facts on which biology, physics or chemistry are based. Such objectivity implies a general acceptance and understanding that precedes any subsequent analysis. There are, indeed, simple social facts: a conversation or a couple, for example. But most of them are complex in their composition and/or in their development. Such is the case, for instance, with a family, in which the relationships between husband and wife, on the one hand, and between father and children, on the other, are organically combined, and these relationships change over time depending on the number and age of the group's members.

The examples we have just given refer to specific social facts, that is to say: those that can be directly observed. There is another, secondary category, which encompasses generic or conceptual social facts, that is, those resulting from a process of abstraction. Thus, a conversation, a wedding and a religious ceremony are concrete social facts, whilst language, marriage and religion – phenomena no less real – are generic social facts. We must also mention social products, which are sometimes also social facts and constitute the result of collective activity. A child, a cathedral and a language are social products-facts; a manufactured article is simply a social product.

It goes without saying that every social phenomenon arises from a causal chain, whether simple or complex in its terms, but always of a social nature. Even the most individual decision does not break this rule, for it stems from a social being who, in contact with his fellow human beings, acts as such, even against his will. What we call chance is nothing more than a mere encounter—fortuitous only in appearance—between two causal processes, and the event it determines is certainly not without a necessary cause. All this means that the concrete social event is of a historical nature, for it has causes and, eventually, effects, and is situated within a temporal process. Except in the exceptional cases we shall mention in paragraph 20, it does not depend at all on the observer's will, unlike scientific facts, which are of a different nature and arise from experimentation. If the observer intervenes in the process, they do so as an actor in their capacity as a social entity and not as a factor external and alien to the phenomenon under study.

18. Social law.

If every social fact were unique in its kind, with nothing in common with any other, the study of social life could not go beyond a mere descriptive listing of isolated phenomena. But this is not the case, as we have already seen when discussing generic social facts. Every family group is obviously unique in terms of its individual members: yet its adult members are always divided between the two sexes, at least at the time of procreation. All families, therefore, have in common the relationship between man and woman. The disintegration of a particular community due to hierarchical deficiencies constitutes a historical phenomenon that has never occurred before and will never occur again:

but in any community, any weakening of the unifying authority inevitably leads to disintegration.

There are, therefore, within social phenomena of the same category, constants that analysis enables us to verify and define. Some relate to the constitution of collective social entities; others, to the causal chain of historical phenomena. Such constants are, of course, entirely independent of human will and even of human consciousness. There is no need to desire them or even to be aware of them for them to impose themselves as a matter of necessity. If relations A and B are indispensable for a particular social fact to arise, either we shall verify their existence – or bring them about – or the fact will not occur. If there is a causal constant between phenomena C and D, we may perhaps prevent C from occurring; but, if it does occur, D is inevitable.

The constants that link social entities are, therefore, identical to those verified by the exact sciences or biology. Hence, it is possible to discover them through a process of induction, which consists of analysing a sufficient number of social facts of the same nature, disregarding the particularities of each one, and establishing which relationships are found in all of them or which always link them to their respective causes or effects. Social law, that is, the constant relationship between social facts, is therefore a partial aspect of the necessary order of collective life.

Let us note at the outset, on the basis of our previous analyses, that social laws fall into two broad categories: some relate to static relationships—that is to say, they remain unchanged over time—whilst others govern dynamic relationships, or, in other words, the process of evolutionary change itself. The existence of collective social entities depends on the former, whilst their emergence, transformation and disappearance depend on the latter. It goes without saying that social statics do not exist independently of social dynamics and that laws from both categories always occur together in the real life of society. It is only through analysis that the observer isolates them from one another, by means of a legitimate but arbitrary process of classification.

19. Sociology.

Viewed objectively, society is, as we have just seen, a set of social facts, juxtaposed and linked in accordance with constants that constitute genuine scientific laws. Hence the necessity and legitimacy of an autonomous science that studies social facts in terms of their nature and causal links, and establishes the laws that determine or condition their emergence. Such a science exists: it is sociology.

We all know that this science, hitherto empirical and fragmentary, was conceived as such and systematised at the end of the first half of the nineteenth century by Auguste Comte, who gave it its name after having called it, more correctly

from a philological point of view, 'social physics'. And we all know, too, that in the mind of its creator, sociology was the daughter of biology.

Nothing could be more understandable. The parallels between a social organism and a living organism have long been apparent. In both cases, we are dealing with a complex system, made up of functionally differentiated cells grouped into specialised organs, which is organised, unified and governed by a central organ: the State or the brain. And in both cases, these are natural systems. In short, the social phenomenon, like the biological phenomenon – but to a far greater extent and unlike the physical or chemical phenomenon – is characterised by its historical uniqueness. It never repeats itself identically because it always appears in an organism that differs from all others in its composition and circumstances. Heating water to a temperature of 100 degrees under a pressure of 76 centimetres of mercury always causes it to boil. But if Koch's bacilli are introduced into various living organisms of the same group, some will contract tuberculosis to a greater or lesser degree of severity, whilst others will destroy or neutralise the foreign bodies. Likewise, a numerical imbalance between the sexes will give rise to polygamy in a society with certain characteristics, whilst it will merely lead to a degree of sexual laxity in another with a different historical development. It is not that biological and social causality is any less rigid than physical causality, but rather that its complexity is far greater and that each of its laws applies within a context from which it cannot be isolated.

The analogy between a social organism and a living organism must not, however, lead us into the confusion into which organicist sociologists fell. As we saw in the previous chapter, a living organism is governed by an embodied intelligence that necessarily imposes itself upon the organs, cells and molecules that make up the whole in question. In this respect, the situation of the social organisms found in certain species of insects is quite similar, for in them the social instinct has become almost entirely de-individualised. This is not the case with human social organisms, in which the law always acts through individual minds that become aware, to a greater or lesser extent, of a situation and make the corresponding decision based on their capacity for understanding and their multiple tendencies, among which the social instinct is always present, though not always predominant. Put another way, every causal chain of social events involves, at each of its links, a psychological mediation. Causality does not lose its validity as a result, but it does become much less rigid and, therefore, much more difficult to grasp.

20. Social morphology and social physiology.

Like the living organism, the social organism presents itself to the observer in two complementary yet distinct aspects: forms, or structures, and functions. It is therefore only natural that sociology should be divided into two interlinked branches: social morphology and social physiology. The terms

"concrete sociology" and "abstract sociology" that are sometimes used seem to us to be highly inappropriate, since, as we shall see, the study of forms involves a process of induction, that is, of abstraction, whilst functions are, in fact, just as concrete as the structures from which they are inseparable.

Social morphology seeks to identify the structural constants of collective life and, consequently, the organisation implied or produced by the social phenomena observed. To do so, it delineates and fixes – as if through a photographic process – the social groups it wishes to study and analyses 'anatomically' the constitutive relationships of each. By induction, it then identifies the structures that are invariably found in groups sharing the same function. This allows both the definition of formal categories and the classification within them of the structural complexes under consideration. In this respect, social morphology plays a role within sociology similar to that of zoology or botany within biology. In carrying out this task of induction, the sociologist cannot fail to verify the existence of variations in the secondary structures of the groups under consideration, nor to note the correlations that manifest themselves in this regard depending on the level and mode of life. In this way, they come to define types of society—primitive or civilised, nomadic or sedentary, agrarian or industrial, etc.—which mark different stages of historical evolution.

Naturally, the study of functional structures would not make much sense if it were not complemented by an examination of the functions themselves—that is to say, considered beyond the fixed forms they require. This is how social physiology seeks to establish the laws according to which different social groups are formed, evolve and, generally speaking, fulfil their respective roles. It does not consider social groups to be juxtaposed, at least in its approach, as social morphology does, but rather as linked social facts whose succession satisfies a need of collective life, without, of course, excluding the interrelationships that exist between functional series of different kinds.

In other words, social morphology concerns itself with the order of human groups, whilst social physiology concerns itself with their development. Needless to say, social order is never static, and social development is always the evolution of an ordered group. Social morphology and social physiology are therefore nothing more than two complementary disciplines which, from different yet inextricably linked perspectives, focus on the same indivisible reality.

21. Applied sociology...

Faced with the facts that constitute the subject of his study, the sociologist may confine himself to analysing them and deducing the laws that govern them. He thus remains, in this case, within the realm of pure sociology, which has no other purpose than to establish the truth. He proceeds, therefore, like any 'laboratory' scientist who

studies one aspect of nature, with a purely speculative concern.

Whilst it is true that pure science has value in itself because of the intellectual satisfaction it affords its practitioners, it is no less true that its findings always pave the way for practical applications. The laws derived by the theorist explain a particular state of affairs, but they also enable us to act in such a way as to bring about or prevent its recurrence, at least to some extent. Hence, every pure science is complemented by one or more applied sciences. Sociology is no exception to this rule.

Unlike social insects, as we have already seen, human beings do indeed have the capacity to influence the structures and evolution of the society of which they form a part. But such a capacity would remain merely theoretical, or would lead to the gravest errors, if it were exercised on the basis of the interests, intuitions, or preconceived or absorbed ideas of individuals. For the transformation of the social order and dynamics to be effectively possible and to yield positive results, it is essential that it be grounded in the active adaptation of the laws established by pure sociology to prevailing circumstances, since not all of these are of a sociological nature. It is not merely, therefore, a matter of analysing and comparing duly verified relationships, but also of assessing the degree of appropriateness of the changes that are theoretically desirable. This is the task of applied sociology.

When we speak of desirable changes, we are addressing the issue of the scale of values without which no choice would be possible between structures or processes. Sociology, being a natural science, need not be subordinate in this field to any other discipline, however valid that discipline may be from another point of view. It possesses, in fact, its own criterion: that of the functional 'health' of the system under consideration. There are social 'illnesses' that harm collective life. Some stem from deficient structures; others, from a failure to adapt to changing circumstances. It is the task of applied sociology to define, by comparison with known social laws, the nature and characteristics of the pathological state and to indicate which remedies are most effective within the realm of the possible.

22. Experimentation and observation.

To be a science, every discipline must have its own objective – and we have seen that sociology does – and an appropriate methodology. As regards this last point, the study of social facts is, compared with most of the classical sciences, at a disadvantage. Not in terms of its development, since in this respect it relies, like the others, on induction, deduction and prediction, but in terms of the analysis of the facts themselves. Experimentation, in fact, is almost entirely off-limits to it. The physicist, the chemist and the biologist – but not the cosmologist, whose discipline no one would think of denying the character of a

science – can artificially reproduce any kind of phenomenon as many times as necessary to obtain a series of data that allows the inductive method to be applied. The sociologist, in this field, is constrained by obstacles of various kinds. Human beings are not as easy to manipulate as objects or other living creatures. Moral principles and the law prohibit exposing individuals or groups of individuals to certain dangers. Any experiment in the social sphere requires considerable material resources. And, above all, the scientist and the subjects of his experiment exist on the same timescale, without the possibility – which human biology affords – of using other animals with shorter lifespans. The sociologist is therefore left with no option but to rely on observation.

At first glance, it seems that sociology also encounters insurmountable difficulties in this field. Indeed, it can observe only present-day facts and would therefore lack comparative data, which it could only find in a past that lies beyond its reach. This would be true if all human societies had come into being at the same time and had developed at the same pace. In reality, we find today peoples of very diverse social types that can be observed in parallel, with almost the same result as if we were able to go back in time to study directly the various stages of development of a given contemporary society. A few hours' flight in Brazil, for example, is enough to take you from the city of São Paulo, an industrial centre with almost European structures, to a pre-feudal-style slave-owning estate and to a Neolithic-level indigenous village.

What is certain is that such an ahistorical juxtaposition does not allow the observer to grasp the evolutionary process in its causal sequence and, in this respect, confines them to mere hypotheses—rationally satisfactory but unproven. From this point of view, sociology finds itself in the same situation as geology, palaeontology or cosmology, although, as we shall see later (Paragraph 25), it has at its disposal the results of previous observations, which gives it a great advantage over the sciences just mentioned.

23. Sociography and sociometry.

The basic methods of sociological observation are of recent systematisation, although they have been used empirically for millennia. It was only in the second half of the nineteenth century that descriptive sociology, or sociography, acquired scientific characteristics, whilst it was not until the beginning of the twentieth century that the quantification of social facts was rationalised through sociometry.

Sociographic observation involves the direct examination of a human group from the dual perspective of its composition and its internal and external relationships. It is carried out from the outside when the sociologist confines himself to describing what he sees, much like an entomologist studying an anthill, or from the inside, when the observer becomes part of the social environment he seeks to analyse. The first method

It ensures a more impartial assessment than the other approach, but runs the risk of the description being superficial. The second allows for the collection of more data and a more in-depth analysis, but creates bonds of sympathy or antipathy between the sociologist and the subjects of their study, with the consequent unintentional distortion of the verified facts. In both cases, direct observation can be supplemented by in-depth interviews – that is, guided conversations – with individuals representative of the various levels and activities within the social group.

Despite all the shortcomings of the descriptive method—and, in particular, the almost inevitable subjectivity of observation—sociography remains the most suitable approach for environmental analysis, especially when combined with motivational research, which falls within the field of social psychology (see Note 29). However, it does not provide us with precise knowledge of social facts: only estimates. Hence, sociometry, which seeks to count and measure the observed relationships, has become its indispensable complement and, indeed, its foundation. It is, in fact, easier and more logical to define the qualitative nuances of social facts that have been previously quantified, whose respective 'specific weights' are therefore already known.

Of course, we are using the term 'sociometry' here in its etymological and true sense, despite the fact that the coiner of the term – though not of the technique, which predates it by a long way – sought, for no good reason, to restrict the application of the method to small social groups.

24. Sampling.

Since the 1930s, sociometry has considerably expanded its scope by incorporating a new technique into its methodology: sampling. This technique makes it possible to analyse large human groups from a quantitative perspective, using a minimum of material resources and in a very short time.

The method involves studying not all the units that make up the population under consideration, but only those that form a representative sample of the whole. The sample is identical to the population in terms of its composition, but quantitatively much smaller. If I may be permitted the comparison, it is similar to the smoked head of a Jivaro Indian, which, reduced to the size of an orange, retains its original facial proportions intact. The percentage indices and numerical averages obtained by sampling are applicable to the whole, with reduced margins of error that are calculated in each case and depend on the size of the sample.

The units studied are chosen at random, in accordance with the rules of probability theory and, more specifically, the law of large numbers. The principle on which this procedure is based is the same one that ensures casinos...

a fixed percentage of winnings, with no risk of bankruptcy. The mathematics of the game demonstrates, in fact, that after a long series of spins, all the numbers on the roulette wheel have come up the same number of times. Since each number has the same probability of coming up as any other on every spin, accidental fluctuations even out in the long run. In sampling surveys, a multi-stage random selection process is employed. For example, if the population of a city is the target population, the map is divided into equal areas, which are numbered, and a certain number of these are selected at random. Subsequently, using the same procedure, a sub-area or block is selected in each area, and then one or more dwellings in each sub-area. Through the first-stage selection, the city is reduced, say, to one hundred areas; through the second-stage draw, to one hundred blocks; and through the third-stage draw, to five hundred or one thousand dwellings, in each of which the residents are counted, if it is a census, or one of them is interviewed, if the study concerns the population's habits or opinions. Only if complete and reliable statistics are available can this probabilistic sampling, based entirely on chance, be replaced by quota sampling, in which the sample is artificially designed according to known proportions, for example in terms of sex, age and social stratification if the study covers a group of individuals.

Each unit in the sample is studied using a questionnaire which the interviewer completes on the basis of their observations, in the case of specific facts – such as the condition of the dwelling or the nature of the crops, for example – or by asking questions carefully formulated by a psychologist with the aim of obtaining accurate answers, when seeking to establish the customs, habits or opinions of the population or a section thereof. The questionnaires are subsequently tabulated, yielding percentage indices or numerical averages relating to the entire population and to each of its characteristic groups (such as gender, age or socio-economic status groups). Margins of error are then calculated and the results obtained are extrapolated to the population and its constituent groups.

The sampling method, if applied correctly, constitutes a highly effective method of sociometric research. However, it is limited to providing objective data—whether concrete or psychological—which the sociologist must place within their social context and interpret appropriately. Sampling research, like sociometry as a whole and, more generally, descriptive observation, provides nothing but material for the subsequent process of induction, without which there would be no science.

25. Historical analysis.

Thanks to sampling techniques, sociological observation is able to provide us with highly satisfactory data regarding current events and, as we have seen (Paragraph 22), even allows for useful comparisons to be made between types of societies at different stages of development. However, from this latter perspective, it would be highly unwise to make sweeping generalisations

by focusing, for example, on the Neolithic village, the slave-owning estate and the industrial city of present-day Brazil as if they were successive stages of a single process. Such a method, systematically employed by 'primitivist' sociologists, is even less acceptable when the social types one seeks to link belong not only to different juxtaposed levels but also to peoples distinguished by race and geographical conditions. There is no valid reason to assume that the social structures and customs of the Australoids, for example, existed exactly as such in the past of Aryan societies.

When sociology examines long-term evolutionary processes, it must therefore analyse past social phenomena that are beyond the scope of direct observation. To do so, it has no choice but to turn to history; this does not, however, mean simply accepting the data and interpretations provided by historians. History, in fact, is not an exact science. It is based on archival material that is generally incomplete and on accounts—always partial—from contemporaries of the events under study. Furthermore, the historian is not an electronic brain. They have political opinions, religious convictions, cultural preferences, etc., which inevitably influence, even subconsciously, the selection of material and the explanation of phenomena. One need only compare studies by Catholic and Protestant historians on 16th- and 17th-century Europe, or by traditionalists, liberals and Marxists on the Middle Ages, to see to what extent ideas alter the presentation of the facts and, above all, their causal chain. Let us also note that the historian tends to give preference to political events, without realising that these are often conditioned, and sometimes determined, by underlying social factors.

Fortunately, the sociologist is not at the mercy of the historian. He needs the historian to delve into the past, uncover material and define specific social facts. But he can and must systematically set aside all theory and even all explanation. To put it another way, he needs the historiographer, not the philosopher of history. The understanding and interpretation of the described facts falls exclusively to him, for only he, being familiar with previously established social laws, is in a position to discover causal relationships and, on that basis, eventually deduce new laws. We might even go further in this regard: the philosopher of history, if not a sociologist, is no more than a more or less enlightened novelist or a more or less charlatan ideologue.

Historical analysis, therefore, by complementing sociography and sociometry, constitutes a fundamental method of sociology, albeit the most perilous. It alone enables us to trace the major evolutionary trends that stem from the past and project them into the future – in other words, to fully understand social evolution.

26. Demography and biosociology.

The observation of social phenomena would yield highly incomplete, and often incomprehensible, data if it were confined to considering the relationships existing within and between human groups whose individual 'raw material' remained undefined. Hence the fundamental nature of two specialised branches of sociology: demography, which studies the population from a numerical perspective, and biosociology – or, as it was known at the beginning of the century, anthroposociology – which approaches it from a qualitative perspective.

It is obvious that two social groups placed in identical material and cultural conditions will not evolve in the same way if one suffers from overpopulation and the other from a demographic deficit. Nor will they do so if they have different birth and death rates or a different distribution of their members in terms of sex and age. It is the task of demography to establish and provide the statistical data relating to these quantitative aspects. In well-administered countries, its task is limited to compiling the data provided by the Civil Registers, which supplement periodic censuses. In other countries, one can only resort to sample surveys, with the serious drawback—since this technique is of very recent application—that there is a lack of previous data to allow for comparisons and the plotting of trend curves.

However significant the size and quantitative composition of a given population may be, its qualitative characteristics have a far greater impact on its development. The historical role of Athens cannot be measured by the number of its inhabitants, nor that of the Spanish conquistadors by the number of soldiers at their disposal. And the progress of a people owes far more to its creative minority than to its passive majority. However, contemporary sociology, with very few exceptions, is reluctant to consider this aspect of the problem. This attitude is influenced by the prevailing materialism, the egalitarian ideology in vogue for the past two hundred years, the aftermath of Allied war propaganda and, more recently, the pressure exerted, on an international scale, by countries that have good reason to fear a comparative analysis in this field.

Biosociology is concerned with the study of the qualitative stratification of the population, both in itself and in relation to functional structures. It defines the composition of the various strata and the origin of their members, that is to say, the process by which they are formed. And, of course, it cannot overlook the factors of biopsychic degeneration. In other words, biosociology studies the individual in a social context, that is to say, not only in terms of their place within the whole but also in terms of their hereditary causes and projections. For individuals pass away, but lineages endure across generations and, therefore, throughout social evolution. Without this specialised branch, the sociologist could work only with unrealistic models, much like – an absurd hypothesis – a livestock breeder who were unaware of the current characteristics and hereditary potential of the domestic animals in his barn or stud farm.

27. General sociology and specialised sociologies.

As we have pointed out above (Paragraph 25), sociology can encompass social groups spanning a wide range of time. It can also focus on a social complex in all its juxtaposed and intertwined activities, or on just one of these. In the first case, what so-called general sociology seeks to do is analyse the forms and dynamics of all kinds that jointly influence social life. In the second, so-called special sociologies study structures corresponding to a specific situation or function. It goes without saying that general sociology does not exclude particular functional data—which, on the contrary, it encompasses in their interrelationships—nor do special sociologies fail to take into account the social context within which the partial activities they primarily consider take place. It is simply that, in both cases, facts and laws that do not constitute the direct object of the research undertaken are taken for granted – and utilised.

Specialised sociologies are as varied as the social phenomena they describe. Any attempt at an exhaustive list would be tedious, as well as inevitably incomplete. Let us mention, however, due to their particular importance, urban sociology and rural sociology, which analyse social relations in terms of population density and ecological conditions; labour sociology and trade union sociology, which study, each in their own field, the human problems arising from the production process; legal sociology and judicial sociology, which consider, respectively, the social impact of the law and the administration of justice; religious sociology and military sociology, still in their infancy; and finally, economic sociology, which is of exceptional importance today, as economic forces have, for the past two centuries, become primary factors in historical evolution.

Political sociology deserves a special mention due to the differences of opinion surrounding the problem of its definition. Indeed, there is no shortage of sociologists who confuse it with political science or, if you will, who seek to subsume the latter, denying it any autonomy. We must acknowledge that the boundary between the two disciplines is not easy to draw. There is no doubt that the political phenomenon is a social phenomenon with particular characteristics and that it is therefore legitimate to speak of political sociology. However, the political phenomenon is more than a social phenomenon insofar as it is regarded as the product of a historical intention applied to the governance of the community. Sociology confines itself to studying the phenomenon itself, with its causes and effects: it is an objective science, like biology. Politics judges this same phenomenon in terms of an end to be achieved: it is a normative science, like medicine. In other words, political sociology and political science consider the same phenomena, but with different approaches and purposes.

28. Sociology and psychology.

Of a different nature but no less serious is the difficulty that arises regarding the relationship between sociology and psychology. In human beings, unlike in insects—as we have already noted (Note 19)—the social aspect is part of a biopsychic whole. Every individual attitude, even when it relates to issues of coexistence and merely expresses the demands of the social instinct, stems from a voluntary decision and is therefore the result of mental deliberation, however rudimentary that may be. Hence, the social cause of every social fact operates through psychological mediation. It is the mental image of the cause that brings about the fact, and such an image is undoubtedly a psychic phenomenon belonging to the field of psychology.

Moreover: the individual, as a social being, is influenced or sometimes shaped by the environment in which they live. They do not make decisions based solely on their sexual instinct, nor even under the impulse of their inherited social instinct. Beliefs, customs, traditions, institutions, fashions, etc., which are products of the environment, constantly enter, in the form of images, into their psychic life and act upon it as dynamic factors. Not to mention collective psychic phenomena which, in certain cases, quite simply alienate those who participate in them and are part of them. Every individual psychic event, therefore, is social to some extent. However, psychology makes a clear distinction between the phenomenon which, however steeped in the social it may be, manifests itself in this or that mind, and the psychic event which, despite having individual expressions, is common to a social group and arises from collective interactions.

Psychology proper studies the individual, including their social background; socio-psychology studies the impact of psychological factors on the lives of human groups and identifies the principles by which mental interactions determine or condition the social behaviour of individuals within those groups. Psychological in its subject matter – the human mind – and in its methodology, social psychology therefore approaches psychological phenomena from a sociological perspective. To such an extent that some people mistakenly regard it as a branch of sociology. In reality, it is merely one of its sources of data, in the same way as anthropology or biology.

It remains, however, that when examining a social phenomenon in terms of its causes and effects, or when considering a chain of social events, the sociologist is confronted with psychological phenomena that he cannot ignore, nor leave to the psychologist, lest he lose sight of the connection within the process under study. And, indeed, he does not do so. He takes the intermediate image into account. But he does not situate it within its individual context, but rather in the place corresponding to the social role it plays.

The psychological phenomenon is considered exclusively as an integral part of the social fact or the complex of social facts. Sociology is not concerned with knowing

why individuals of certain types react in a particular way under certain circumstances. It is enough to note that they always do so. Whether the image constitutes a constant stage in a process or a constant link between the constituent elements of a social fact, this does not undermine the causal rigour of the phenomenon nor hinder its sociological analysis.

29. Sociology and philosophy.

Contemporary sociology increasingly tends to confine itself to the mere observation of facts, reducing itself to a collection of statistics and images. In doing so, it loses all meaning. For there is no science without the induction of laws, and without laws there are no known causal chains and, consequently, no possible understanding. And without understanding there is no effective action. Either sociology is a science, or it constitutes a mere pastime for dilettantes, if not a powerful means of dumbing down the elites.

A genuine science is not enough, however, to extract from social facts all that they have to offer. It is not possible to study a human community as if it were an anthill. This is because man is not merely a social animal but, moreover, a political animal: he does not live within a group organised according to rules individually imposed by instinct, as we have already seen (Paragraph 19), but must, to a certain extent, become aware of the laws necessary for his own affirmation and even for his very survival. It is not enough for human beings to establish social laws: they must also respect them and ensure they are respected.

Moreover: the complete absence of automatism evident in our social processes demands a constant choice between the possibilities presented to us at every political juncture. And no choice is possible without a prior value judgement. Here, sociology is powerless. It merely shows us that a particular course of action we take will necessarily lead to a particular consequence. It does not tell us whether that consequence, apart from its nature as normal or abnormal (see Paragraph 37), is desirable or not, nor does it indicate the scale of values on the basis of which we might formulate our judgement and, therefore, make our decision. It goes without saying that such a scale cannot validly arise from mere individual conscience, since we are dealing with social values.

Sociology and politics must, therefore, be complemented by a philosophy which, whilst accepting the natural laws of social morphology and dynamics as an intangible foundation, transcends them by seeking their first cause and their ultimate ends.

Such is the imperative raison d'être of social philosophy. Its task is an exceedingly perilous one. For it entails the collaboration of disciplines as diverse as sociology and politics, on the one hand, and ethics, metaphysics and theology, on the other, with the constant risk of an unacceptable confusion between elements that belong

They follow disparate lines of reasoning and, in terms of their analysis, stem from distinct rational processes. It is hardly surprising that the vast majority of works published on the subject reach unacceptable conclusions by introducing unscientific factors—often as arbitrary as Hegelian logic, the 'entelechy of Freedom' or the 'Omega Point'—into the causal chain of social events.

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BOOK ONE

MORPHOLOGY

III. STRUCTURES

30. Definitions.

Let us imagine a researcher arriving from some distant planet and setting out to study humankind, much like an entomologist observing a previously unknown insect. At first glance, it would seem to him that members of our species are gregarious, for, save in the rarest of cases, he would not find them in isolation. He would then begin to classify human groups solely on the basis of the number of their members. Soon, however, he would have to revise his view. He would find, in fact, that individuals do not simply come together or mix at random in every instance; that each has their own den, where they usually meet other human beings at night, always the same ones; that the members of each night-time social group, for the most part, go out in the morning, six days a week, and join different groups for a few hours, where they always meet the same individuals; that on Sundays some night-time social groups remain together, whilst others break up as on weekdays but go on to join new groups that appear only on this day, some always similar to themselves and others completely renewed in terms of their members.

Upon examining the various groups thus defined, our researcher would note that they differ in terms of their activities, as well as the sex and age of their members, and that the nature of each group stems from these variations. Taking his observation a step further, he would find that the various groups are not merely juxtaposed, but that there are contacts of various kinds between them. Being a scientist, our researcher would expand his observations and conclude that some of the relationships linking individuals and groups are unique, whilst others are always identical to themselves. The latter, of course, would catch his attention, as they would enable him to deduce the laws of human social organisation.

Such enduring relationships are what sociology refers to as structures. They constitute, in effect, the formal and dynamic conditions of the existence and functioning of human groups, whose formation and, consequently, whose evolution depend on them. They exist between social entities – individual or collective – of the same nature or of different natures, as we shall see in later chapters. But they always have the character of a bond required by the performance of a functional activity.

31. Natural structures.

Not all social structures possess the same degree of necessity, nor, therefore, do they have the same importance. Some, in fact, pertain to the very nature of man as a social being; that is to say, they constitute conditions for his existence and fulfilment. Without them, there would be no society, or society would fail to meet the minimum requirements of its purpose. These are, therefore, structures of natural law.

It is obvious, first and foremost, that one cannot speak of the existence of humankind without the procreation of the species. Now, human beings are not born through spontaneous generation but as the product of the sexual union of a man and a woman. They depend, therefore, on the biopsychic relationship established between two individuals of different sexes. This relationship constitutes, consequently, not only a natural structure but the basic natural structure. The biosocial group – the family (see paragraphs 42 to 46) – may well take on various secondary forms: yet we shall never find it without a genital bond between some of its adult members. Nor would we find an autonomous social unit in which the function of reproduction is not fulfilled and the biosocial relationship in question therefore does not exist.

On the other hand, as we have already seen (Section 4), the survival of the newborn depends on a relationship of authority that is established spontaneously between parents and children. Without it, procreation would lose all meaning, as its fruits would vanish within a few hours. It is, therefore, a structure as natural as the previous one, and we should not be surprised to find it, in various forms, in all social groups, as it is merely a consequence of inequality amongst men. The political structures established at the highest level of social organisation stem from the same source and respond to the same need.

Following on from sexual relations and running parallel to hierarchical relations are the natural structures required by economic and educational functions, the purpose of which is to satisfy human beings' consumption needs. The newborn receives nourishment; the child, in addition, images. Without the former, man could not survive. Without the latter, he would fail to fully realise his potential. Hence the relationships imposed by the production and distribution of material and cultural goods, which, in principle, are indispensable.

Natural law also gives rise to the military structures required by the needs of defence and the affirmation of society as a whole, as well as to judicial structures, which ensure compliance with the rules of coexistence and, consequently, the maintenance of order. For without them, the fulfilment of the human being – always considered, let us not forget, in their capacity as a social being – would not be assured. Finally, let us mention structures of a cultural nature, or superstructures (see Paragraph 39), which arise from man's creative impulse beyond the realm of the indispensable, such as, in particular, the relationships engendered by

aesthetic sense, independent of educational needs, or the desire to grasp the totality of reality, including that which lies beyond the reach of our sensation and understanding, as is the case with relationships of a religious nature. Such superstructures are factors in the constitution of formal structures found in all societies and which, as they stem from specific human tendencies, may also be considered natural.

32. Historical structures.

Natural structures are permanent. The social groups whose framework they form cannot undergo any fundamental change without ceasing to exist – nor can they be qualitatively weakened without degenerating. Observation and historical analysis show us, however, that these groups, despite performing the same functions satisfactorily, are not identical everywhere or in every era. To the layman, the monogamous family of our contemporary West and the polygamous family, in its two forms, found in certain regions of Africa and Asia, have little in common; the state of the Roman Empire and that of a Chavante tribe; the army of any modern nation and the militia of a medieval fiefdom; the justice of Louis XIV and that of Saint Louis; and so on in all fields.

But the layman tends to focus primarily on appearances. The sociologist, on the other hand, will note that at the heart of functional groups of the same nature lie identical natural structures, and that the differences which so catch the layman's eye are merely variations on a single theme. It is logical, in fact, that the exercise of a given function always requires the social forms and dynamics without which it could not take place. But essential functions are performed in groups of varying size, complexity and evolutionary level, and under changing circumstances. Hence, natural structures take on forms suited to each situation or, to put it another way, secondary structures are added which, without altering their essence, adapt them to the needs of the place and the moment. They are called historical because they arise, develop and disappear throughout the temporal evolution of peoples. They are not permanent like the natural relationships that form their framework, but they are enduring because they respond to deep-seated demands independent of any individual arbitrariness. This is particularly the case with federative relationships (see Chapter V), which unite social groups prior to their establishment and enable them to assert themselves more effectively.

The structures of the psychic order, or superstructures (see Note 39), are also historical; they express the various stages and levels of civilisation and the cultural variations that distinguish them. Mental interrelationships, from which collective thought arises, are natural in terms of their existence, but their variations are far broader, deeper and more intense than those observed among social forms.

33. Occasional structures.

Natural structures never exist in their pure form, as they would then be reduced to mere unreal schemes. Every social formation exists in time; that is to say, it evolves ceaselessly, and every stage of its existence necessarily has a historical character. Therefore, in the reality of facts, one does not find natural structures that are not historical, that is to say, that do not manifest themselves in one of their possible variants, considering the minimal relationship of the case as one of these.

However, there are secondary structures, also of a natural basis, which arise in the course of social evolution without thereby acquiring a strictly historical character, in that they do not constitute constants of an era but rather accidental phenomena – which is not to say without cause – that respond to a need to adapt to momentary circumstances. Such structures, termed 'occasional', are of course situated within the historical framework in which they appear and from which they derive their character. Yet they do not characterise a particular stage of a people's evolution; rather, they express the demands of a specific situation at a particular time and place, whether that situation constitutes a social phenomenon of recurring occurrence or is unique in its kind.

War, for example, stems from a natural human tendency and, in social terms, from a no less natural need for defence or the affirmation of the group within which it occurs. It is not, however, with a few exceptions, a long-lasting phenomenon, but rather an incident that disrupts the normal course of history. Logically, the usual structures are insufficient to cope with such a sudden change in circumstances. They are therefore temporarily modified, and others are added for the duration of the hostilities and their consequences: the State curtails the powers of subordinate bodies; many families lose some of their members who join the armed forces; welfare organisations expand their scope of action; and so on. Similarly, an economic crisis, whatever its origin, with its consequences of unemployment and hunger, leads to the creation of emergency enterprises, the setting up of free canteens, the declaration of moratoriums, etc., that is to say, to the establishment of temporary structures that will disappear once normality is restored.

Associative relationships (see Paragraph 52), even when they stem from cultural imperatives or the innate human *spirit of play*, often also have an accidental character, particularly in cases where they result from fashion, that is to say, from unstable shifts in collective thought.

34. Horizontal structures.

The classification we have just made in the three preceding sections refers to the nature of social structures.

We must now consider these from the point of view of their functional position.

Observation allows us to identify, in any society, what we might call structural levels: sets of social entities situated at the same level of organisation, whether or not they perform the same role. To draw a purely formal comparison, they are somewhat like the rooms in a flat, or the flats in a block of flats, or the houses on a street. The social entities that make up each structural plane may be organically linked in a more or less close manner, like the rooms and flats in our comparison, or merely juxtaposed, like the houses lined up along a street. In the first case, they are related to one another insofar as the whole possesses its own order, distinct from that which a simple sum of its constituent elements would have. The relationships that bind them are then called horizontal structures.

A few examples will help us to understand what this is all about. Let us consider the various family units in a modern city. They are all made up of individuals. They exist side by side, and this situation creates certain physical relationships between them, if only those arising from the public services they share. But, furthermore, there exist between these various families relationships of coexistence – social, therefore – due to kinship, neighbourhood, cultural exchanges, etc., and all are linked to one another, whether they like it or not, whether they are aware of it or not, by their position of dependence on the same municipal authority, which compels them to act in the same way in certain circumstances. We thus have social groups of the same biopsychic nature situated on the same structural plane. We can broaden the picture by observing, within the same city, the existence of other groups that are also made up of individuals but which carry out economic activities and maintain links not only with other businesses but also with families that form part of their clientele or supply them with staff. Families and businesses – which are, moreover, subject to the same authority – are therefore situated on the same level, and the relationships linking them constitute horizontal structures. Groups of a different nature, which are also at the same level of organisation, occupy the same position.

At another structural level, for example, are the municipalities, which are composed not of individuals but of groups and associations (see Paragraph 40); they are subject to the same administrative authority and maintain various types of relationships with one another within the provincial sphere. Such relationships also constitute horizontal structures, like all those that link social groups of the same degree of complexity.

35. Vertical structures.

In the previous section, we could not help but get slightly ahead of ourselves, when speaking of authorities, in the logical development of our analysis. Nothing could be more natural, on the other

, since horizontal structures never exist without the command relationships – or vertical structures – upon which the very existence of social groups depends, whatever their nature.

We already know (see Section 4) that the smallest and most fundamental unit of any social organisation, the family, is governed by a dual hierarchical relationship: one that subordinates women to men, and one that places children under the authority of their parents. The first stems from the bio-psychological inequality between the sexes. The second stems from the biopsychic inequality between adults and children and, fundamentally, from the dependence in which children find themselves with regard to their survival and upbringing. The vertical structures thus determined do not, therefore, arise from voluntary decisions but from the natural order imposed both by the characteristics of the individuals comprising the unit and by the functioning of the unit itself.

We would reach the same conclusions if we considered any other organised group of individuals. There is no company, for example, without the hierarchical structures demanded by the very nature of collective work: without a foreman, a team of labourers could not even lift a single rail, a task that is simple par excellence. All the more so, authority becomes essential when technical factors come into play. In a completely different sphere, it is inconceivable to have a parish of any religion without ecclesiastical command structures, or a school without a teacher possessing authority over the pupils. Even contractual bodies are incapable of acting unless they appoint a chairperson.

We find ourselves in exactly the same situation when we look at more complex entities at other levels of organisation. Without a unifying and guiding authority, a municipality or a county would descend into chaos. And this is all the more true of a region. History teaches us ad nauseam that social order exists only where command prevails. The early Middle Ages knew of no effective and constant authority other than that of the feudal lord: order reigned within the village and disorder between the villages. Later, as the process of concentration—that is to say, the extension—of power took hold, order extended to the province and the dynastic community, whilst disorder manifested itself only between the provinces and, later still, between the dynastic communities. Everywhere and at all times, political structures—vertical by definition—constitute the sine qua non of social coexistence at its highest level.

In organisations of a certain complexity, top-down command relationships are complemented by other vertical – bottom-up – structures through which the unified constituent elements present themselves to the governing body, either directly through their own authorities or indirectly through delegates. Command is thus supplemented by representation, without which the synthesis of internal forces (see Paragraph 135) would not be possible or, at the very least, would not be satisfactory.

36. Dynamic structures

Our examples in the preceding paragraphs referred to static structures, that is to say, to relationships that remain identical to themselves for as long as the social groups whose framework they constitute—or the historical or contingent structures that give rise to them—continue to exist. These fixed structures, which form the stable order of social organisation, are not the only ones observed by the sociologist. For forms occur as constants within an evolutionary process, that is, as the substrate of a changing causal chain. Successive social facts do not occur in isolation: they are linked to one another by natural, historical or occasional relationships which remain constant within the limits imposed by their duration and thus constitute genuine dynamic structures.

Let us consider a couple (see Paragraph 41) that becomes a family upon the birth of a child. The fundamental change that takes place is not accidental: the child and the new structures brought about by their presence stem from the relationships that previously existed between the man and the woman. We are thus faced with a natural process whose stages are strictly linked by a causal relationship – or dynamic structure. Another relationship of the same type, albeit with the opposite significance, will be established when the children, now adults, move away from their parents to form, generally speaking, new couples, and the original unit is transformed from a family back into a couple.

Another example, of a very different nature. The Renault car factory came into being when its founder designed and built his first car with his own hands. Over the course of several decades, it grew into an extremely complex industrial empire, expanding and diversifying its static structures. Such a gradual transformation was the result of a development process in which every new structure, or every modification of an existing structure, logically stemmed from the previous organisation—so logically, in fact, that laws of growth can be established which apply to all industrial enterprises. This suffices to demonstrate the existence, amongst successive forms, of dynamic structures. We shall reach the same conclusion if we observe, no longer the development of a social entity through the creation of new aggregate elements, but any process of federalisation, that is, of growth through the absorption or unification of pre-existing units. When the Carolingian Empire disintegrated, peasant families grouped together in villages: the future fiefdoms. Subsequently, several fiefs federated to form a province, and several provinces to form a dynastic community. But we can already see that the static structures at each level of organisation emerged from the preceding ones according to perfectly known laws established by induction from the dynamic structures observed in each instance of federalisation.

What holds true of the relationships that link social entities—considered in their physical forms—over time holds even more true of

much more fluid superstructures. Let us confine ourselves here to stating the fact: we shall analyse it later (Paragraph 39).

37. Pathological structures.

So far we have considered social structures in themselves, without making any value judgements. We already know, however (see section 19), that sociology has its own criterion in this regard: that of the 'health' of the social whole and, by implication, that of its constituent elements. We shall return to this matter in due course (Book Four). But the analogical concept we mentioned is sufficient for us to divide structures into normal and pathological. They are normal when they correspond to the nature of the social entities in question and to the historical circumstances to which they must adapt. They are pathological when, on the contrary, they contradict the demands of those social entities or hinder their necessary adaptation to historical realities. Or, if we may be so bold, to put it in everyday terms, they are normal when they serve their purpose and pathological when they do not. This is regardless of the functional disturbances that also affect social groups but which stem from other causes.

When looking for an example of a pathological structure within the modern family, we shall not, therefore, focus on the weakening of marital or paternal authority—a typical case of functional disruption—but rather on divorce, which breaks the unity of the family unit without destroying it entirely. With the separation of the spouses, the organic relationships that bound them disappear, but the vertical structure linking them to their children remains, albeit weakened and split. If the divorced spouses each remarry separately, the situation becomes even more complicated due to the superimposition of new structures upon that which remains of the original unit.

At a higher level of organisation, social classes and political parties are classic examples of pathological structures. They effectively link individuals regardless of the basic groups to which they belong. They thus tend to turn the people into a mass, that is to say, to eliminate natural organic structures in favour of artificial relationships that merely reinforce a process of disintegration which, like any subversive chain reaction, was already pathological in itself.

We have just seen in a single example – for classes and parties are aspects of the same phenomenon of massification – that organic social maladies manifest themselves through structures, both horizontal and vertical, both static and dynamic. We have yet to mention pathological superstructures: subversive ideologies, corrupting institutions, disintegrating customs, etc., which weaken healthy structures and, at times, transform them into abnormal ones. Such was the case with liberal ideology, which was used by the bourgeoisie in the 18th century to undermine the prevailing historical-natural structures in the political and economic spheres and replace them with pathological structures.

Note that a structure may be necessary, and therefore legitimate, whilst still being pathological. For example, that of the proletariat, imposed as a means of defence against the bourgeoisie already organised as a class.

38. r infrastructures

Not all structures carry the same weight in social evolution, which in turn exists only in relation to the most basic family ties. Due to historical circumstances, some structures have come to be regarded as essential for the survival and consolidation of the social entities they bind together, and of the groups thus formed. These are the infrastructures. Thus, in the feudal era, the military organisation of the population, since the very existence of the village community depended on defence, due to the disappearance of the previous social order. Similarly, in the capitalist world, economic relations, owing to the dominance of the bourgeoisie, whose aim is profit.

Infrastructure takes precedence over all other coexisting structures, which become merely its complement, although they can, of course, influence it. When peasants in the early Middle Ages gathered around the military commander who would become their lord, the fields surrounding the fort – the future castle – were cultivated without anyone concerning themselves with who they had belonged to previously. The only thing that matters is that the farmer can retreat in time in the event of an attack. And the produce is consumed in common, regardless of any measure of individual labour. For economic activity is entirely subordinate to military needs. In today's capitalist world, by contrast, political and, to a large extent, cultural activities are subject to financial power, and economic relations act as the infrastructure. The two examples we have chosen clearly demonstrate that there is no constant in this regard throughout history and that any structure may, at a given moment, if circumstances demand it, come to prevail over the others. It even happens that a superstructure (see paragraph 39) is at the same time an infrastructure: for example, religious faith during the Crusades or in any African tribe governed by magic.

Our examples also show that infrastructures can be normal, as in the feudal system, or pathological, as in the capitalist system. As such, they are always historical or contingent, even though they are natural as structures.

Beneath the infrastructure, whatever its nature, lies the ethnic substrate that gives the whole of the infrastructures their qualitative character. To a certain extent, this substrate can be regarded as a sub-infrastructure or natural primary infrastructure, since it has a decisive influence on all existing social relations, even though it creates only some of them.

39. r superstructures

When we speak of forms, we are accustomed to picturing tangible objects, and we might almost say solid ones. Not always, however, as we commonly use the expression 'form of thought'. Let us broaden the concept and we shall find sets of social relations of a mental nature: beliefs, ideas, ethical values, legal norms, artistic trends, etc., which link, within a given sphere, individuals who think in the same way. These are the superstructures.

These are generally psychological projections of existing structures, with their current infrastructure. We think what we are and in terms of what we are. It would be inconceivable, for example—except during periods of change—for a people to hold a conception of the family order that runs counter to the prevailing reality. For if this were the case, it would transform the modifiable structures of the biosocial whole. Only revolutionary or subversive minorities are capable of devising or accepting outdated superstructures, which for them constitute voluntaristic projections of desired structures. Thus the conquering bourgeoisie – to use Jorge Sorel's expression – adopted and disseminated, in the 18th century, the liberal ideology, which corresponded to its will to power, in opposition to the prevailing structures.

If, as we have just seen, mental forms can in certain cases precede objective forms and contribute to their emergence, it is also possible that they may survive a structural change and act as remnants of an order that has already disappeared. The trade unionists of the last century, who defended the interests of the proletariat and sought to destroy the demoplutocratic regime, came up against the corporatist mentality of a large proportion of the workers. Mentally conditioned by a world in which the workshop constituted a community of hierarchically organised producers, they were unable, despite their status as wage earners, to grasp the change that had taken place and resisted the class struggle because they could not conceive of any antagonism between members of the same production unit. They continued to think in terms of past structures.

Superstructures are not, therefore, merely the automatic result of existing structures. They do not constitute the froth on the surface of the historical current, but rather an active element of social dynamics, as we shall see in Chapter
XVI. Recognising an interaction between structures and superstructures is not sufficient to encompass the entirety of a process which includes, on the part of the psychic factors of social evolution, a retarding action and a creative action.

The pressure exerted by superstructures is all the greater in that they are, more directly than structures, under the influence of the ethnic substrate which constitutes, as we have already seen (Paragraph 38), the primary infrastructure of society. For mental life cannot escape racial determination. To verify this fact, it suffices to compare the religious—heroic—spirit of the Crusaders with that of the early Christians, or to observe the different forms adopted by democratic ideology

in Anglo-Saxon, Celtic, Mediterranean and Indo-American countries, for example.

IV. SOCIAL GROUPS AND ASSOCIATIONS

40. Definitions.

In the previous chapters, we deliberately used a very vague term – 'social group' – to refer to any collective social entity. We could not have been more precise, since the only thing we had established was the human need to live in society. A closer look reveals, however, that 'social groups' are not all identical and that they can be classified according to their nature, complexity and extent.

Let us first consider, as we shall do in this chapter, the simplest collective social entities in terms of their composition: those which, analytically, can be reduced solely to relationships between individuals. We shall readily see that some are functional and therefore indivisible, whilst others are merely the result of a decision taken by their members with a view to facilitating the pursuit of one or other of their individual activities. Hence the distinction between a social group and an association.

We refer to a social group as any collective comprising two or more individuals who are united and organised hierarchically in order to collectively perform one or more functions that none of them could carry out alone. For example, the family, a biosocial group consisting essentially of a man and a woman with a view to procreation; or the workshop, an economic-social group comprising several producers who complement one another for the purpose of jointly manufacturing a specific item. We shall see in the following chapter that the social group constitutes the building block of complex social structures at the organisational level.

An association is defined as any group comprising two or more individuals who have come together in a hierarchical structure to carry out, jointly, one or more non-functional or quasi-functional activities which each of them might perform, with less ease or satisfaction, on an individual basis. For example, a sports club or a trade union. Also considered associations are groups of a similar nature formed by social groups that come together by decision of their respective authorities without establishing organic relationships between them.

The difference between a social group and an association is not always clear. Sometimes it depends on the sociologist's judgement, as, for example, in the case of monks in a monastery, whom the believer will regard as a group – because of the religious function they necessarily perform together – and the non-believer as a mere association. Without

However, let us give two examples for the sake of clarity: a football team is a social group because of its internal functional complementarity, whereas a football club, which brings together players and supporters, is nothing more than a simple association; Similarly, a painter's studio – comprising the master, assistants and pupils – is a social group, whereas a circle of painters, united to exchange ideas or organise exhibitions, is an association.

Alongside social groups but at a lower hierarchical level, associations constitute the 'raw material' of complex organic wholes.

41. The couple.

The simplest social group or association, whatever its purpose, is clearly one that brings two individuals together. One of the binary pairs that can be observed is of particular importance, not only because of the role it plays in certain cases, but also, and above all, because of its essential nature. This is the couple, that is to say, the pair formed, through sexual relations, by a man and a woman.

This situation stems from a natural characteristic of human beings: their organic incompleteness. Isolated in a limited but sufficient environment, the individual may continue to live, but part of their biopsychic being will become almost useless. Whilst their vital organs, in fact, find within the organism the conditions and the reason for their functioning, their sexual organs lose almost all meaning if they are not combined with complementary organs found in an individual of the opposite sex. Put another way, man possesses only half of the complete sexual system, as it must be in order to function normally. His reproductive apparatus is, therefore, much more than an instrument of inter-individual contact. It constitutes one of the two parts of a single functional system. Each is organised to combine with the other, yet belongs to an autonomous living being without which it would cease to exist. Hence, the full functional existence of the human being requires union with an individual of the opposite sex, that is, the formation of a couple. Hence, too, the sexual instinct, which leads the 'partial' being to seek its complement.

We know that the reproductive system, and consequently the sexual instinct, are designed for procreation, although this is not their sole purpose. Yet biology teaches us that nature increases its chances in this regard by creating a profusion of theoretical possibilities that go beyond actual possibilities. The human species is not subject to the constraints imposed on other mammals and animals by the periodicity of the oestrus cycle. Individual sexual demands thus exceed the biological capacity and social needs of procreation. It is natural, therefore, for a couple to engage in more sexual activity than is required for the function of reproduction. And it is also natural for couples, whether long-term or casual, to form that are exclusively dedicated to consuming the sexual surplus. Prostitution itself, regardless of its

(see Paragraph 174), by facilitating the formation of casual couples, responds to the instinctive demands of those who resort to it and, more importantly, to the social need to protect women against abuses of the same origin.

Since it arises, in all cases, from a natural inclination, a couple—whatever its purpose and however brief its duration—undoubtedly constitutes a social group and not an association. The fact that it is formed through a contract, whether formal or tacit, between individuals or between families does not in any way invalidate this conclusion. What defines an association is not its contractual origin but, as we have seen in the previous paragraph, its functional nature.

42. The monogamous family.

To place, amongst social groups, both the couple whose sole aim is the satisfaction of sexual desire and the couple whose purpose and outcome is, in addition, procreation does not in any way imply that both types of binary pairs are accorded the same structural hierarchy. In the first case, the group in question responds, in effect, fundamentally to individual needs and, barring matters of good order, belongs to the realm of private natural law; in the second, it ensures the continuity of the species and, consequently, of society. From an objective point of view, the difference does not lie in the observance or neglect of sacramental or administrative formalities, nor even in intentions, which pertain only to the moral life, but in the social outcome that does or does not materialise. However regular their relationship may be and however well-intentioned its members may be in this regard, a childless couple is identical, from a social point of view and in terms of its nature, to a couple that forms occasionally in a brothel. With the birth of a child – and potentially from the moment of conception – the couple becomes, on the contrary, the structural foundation of a broader group of fundamental social significance: the family.

As we have seen previously (Paragraph 31), the smallest biosocial unit—that is, the couple and their child—is governed by strictly natural relationships. There can be no procreation without the sexual union of a man and a woman, and such a union presupposes, even in its purely biological aspect, male supremacy. There can be no survival or development of the child without the authority that parents exercise over him by virtue of their seniority. Without this dual vertical structure, the family does not exist.

It is obvious that the relationship of authority between parents and children does not change in essence when the number of children increases, thereby multiplying the instances in which this relationship applies. It is not so clear to us that the numerical ratio corresponding to the basic couple within the monogamous family can change without affecting its natural structure. It is clearly neither by chance nor out of asceticism that the biosocial group is reduced, in the West today, to a couple and their children. But the reason for this custom easily eludes us. It is none other, however, than the statistical equilibrium which, barring accidental circumstances,

This is evident between the sexes. Given that there are the same number of women as men, it is natural for couples to form in such a way that there are no surplus individuals. But the system fails when, for some historical reason, this numerical equivalence disappears, as happened, for example, in Germany after the Second World War: some ten million women were forced, due to the lack of men who had fallen in the conflict, to give up family life and, consequently, motherhood in general.

43. The polygamous family.

In certain societies and at certain times, the imbalance we have just mentioned is not the result of chance but constitutes a consistent phenomenon. Such is the case, for example, with the warrior tribes of the most diverse races. Frequent battles, in which only primitive weapons are used, eliminate young men, and men alone. There are then surplus women, or there would be if the family did not adopt polygamous structures.

Contrary to popular belief, the biosocial group consisting of a man, several women and their children does not differ, in terms of its formal relationships, from the monogamous family. The hierarchical structures dictated by gender and age remain unchanged. The man forms a couple with each of his wives, and the unit of authority within the group is ensured by the sole head of the family. The variation observed is, therefore, purely quantitative: in the polygamous family there are several women, just as, in the monogamous family, there are generally several children, without the multiplication of age structures altering their nature or undermining their validity.

Polygyny is such a natural response by society to a gender imbalance caused by a surplus of women that we see it emerging, throughout history, even among the Aryan peoples with the strongest monogamous traditions. In the Middle Ages, when constant warfare reduced the proportion of men in the feudal aristocracy, the lord would often officially keep one or more concubines in his castle; they occupied a position inferior to that of the lawful wife but were by no means in a humiliating situation. Their children, educated alongside the legitimate ones, were regarded as second-borns, and the word ‘bastard’, far from being insulting, was used as a sort of title of nobility: before his victory over the English, the Conqueror was known to all as William the Bastard, and it was Dunois, the Bastard of Orléans, who accompanied Joan of Arc into battle. It was, therefore, a matter of customary polygamy. It would not be very difficult to find similar situations today in the interior of Latin American countries, where the migration of men to industrial cities creates a certain imbalance between the sexes.

The polyandrous family is quite different, and is extremely rare. The best-known example is found in Tibet, a region where as yet unidentified biological factors result in many more boys being born than girls. Each woman then takes

multiple husbands. Structural couples form as normal, and the relationship between adults and children does not appear to suffer any negative consequences from the impossibility of determining paternity. However, the woman, who is the centre of the family, cannot be its head, as her position in relation to each of her husbands is one of subordination. And, of course, there cannot be several male heads of the household, nor can one husband hold supremacy over the others, as in both cases conflicts would be inevitable. The polyandrous family always resolves the problem in the same way: it assigns authority to the woman's brother. This is nothing more than an unsatisfactory stopgap, as the natural order of the group is disrupted.

44. The nuclear family and the extended family.

Until now we have considered the family within generational boundaries, with no structures other than those linking parents and minor children. Such a conjugal family is what we observe, with few exceptions, in the Western world today; it is the only one recognised, regulated and promoted by liberal legislation. It has its origin in a marriage contract that arises solely from the will of the contracting parties and ends, at least as a biosocial group, upon reaching the age of majority or, at best, the marriage of the children. Its structures do not go beyond the bare minimum necessary to preserve the natural biopsychic framework of procreation. They are far from sufficient to encompass the full reality of the family process.

The contractual nature of a couple's relationship does not, in fact, destroy the natural bonds that link each partner to the biosocial group that gave them life and raised them. At most, it may artificially suspend those bonds. Whether they like it or not, an individual is the sum of their genetic heritage and their personal development. They owe everything to their ancestors, both distant and recent. Even when they try to reject it, they are steeped in a family tradition that is perpetuated, albeit in a modified form, through the generations. It should come as no surprise, then, to find that the conjugal family occupies a very limited place in space and time and that, far from constituting a perfect social form, it continues to maintain, in certain respects, relationships that transcend it.

Our ancestors viewed the family as a temporal chain of marital groups and attached greater importance to its dynamic structures than to its static ones. Under the agnatic system of classical Rome, a woman who married severed all ties with her family to become fully part of her husband's. Under the subsequent cognatic system, also practised among the Germanic peoples and which lasted until the end of the 18th century, marriage created bonds of 'alliance' – the French language retains the word – between families. But in both cases, the new marital unit was formed and developed within the man's pre-existing family and under the father's authority. When the father died, family authority passed to the eldest son, along with the estate that provided for him materially. Hence the name 'family-trunk' given to the biosocial group thus constituted: the primogeniture ensured the maintenance, by

beyond the biological succession of individuals, a central cell from which branch cells—that is, secondary conjugate groups—sprang forth without severing their ties to it; these enjoyed a degree of independence but remained subject to the authority of the head of the family, from whom they received protection in times of need.

45. Family continuity and authority.

When, in referring to the traditional family, we speak of the authority of its head, we run the risk of falling into serious confusion. Authority and property belonged to the family and not to the man who temporarily enjoyed them. The law was conceived solely in terms of bio-historical continuity, which was, for the group as for nature, the fundamental reality. It is logical, therefore, that custom and law were concerned, above all, with ensuring the continuity of command in a direct line. For the transfer of family authority to a collateral branch, whose ties to the 'main line' could only have weakened over time, would have undermined the temporal unity of the group.

In a monogamous family, divorce and the repudiation of a wife with a child are inconceivable. They effectively violate the natural order of the family unit by disrupting the vertical structure that a child needs for their upbringing. Even primates instinctively remain united until their offspring reach adulthood. The exclusion of a barren or adulterous wife, on the other hand, responds to the demands of group continuity: in the first case, indeed, direct succession to leadership is impossible; in the second, the purity of the lineage is not guaranteed. In the early Roman family, divorce was mandatory in the event of the woman's infertility, and adoption was authorised exclusively if the inability to procreate lay with the man, or when the marriage produced only daughters, who were unable to inherit leadership. It was for the same reason that antiquity prohibited male celibacy and obliged a widow without a son to marry her husband's brother, attributing to the latter the legal paternity of the children of the new marriage. In the polygynous family, as we still know it—though it is in the process of disappearing—in countries governed by Sharia law, the issue of repudiation arises in different terms. Indeed, the centre of the bio-social group is not the couple – since there are several – but the father. The woman is, consequently, merely a secondary and incidental element who may be excluded without even undermining, by virtue of the multiplicity of wives, the necessary vertical relationship between adults and children.

Continuity, as we have already said, requires the authority of a single leader. On the other hand, the family naturally predates more complex social forms. The necessary conclusion: the *pater familias* is sovereign within his group's jurisdiction. It is no coincidence, as Fustel de Coulange notes, that the Latin word *pater* – just as in Sanskrit and Greek – does not mean 'father' – which is *genitor* – but 'king'. If the right of life or death over the adulterous woman and, unconditionally, over the children; which stemmed from the patriarchal era (see Paragraph 46),

Although paternal authority over women, children and family property quickly disappeared from the family law of antiquity, it continued to prevail fully among us until the late 18th or early 19th century. It was only then that it began to weaken, under the influence of liberal legislation, until it has now reached levels that are clearly pathological (see Paragraph 175).

46. The patriarchal family.

The family we have examined so far is one that can be observed in various historical contexts, though always within a broader social framework. In certain times and places, however, we find it isolated, or at least without organic links to any other human group. The still imprecise terminology of the social sciences often leads to this patriarchal family being confused with the nuclear family we defined earlier (Paragraph 44) or with any type of biosocial group where paternal authority reigns supreme. It is also common for the term to be applied to any complex family; that is to say, one composed of several conjugal nuclei juxtaposed under the command of the eldest male ancestor. Nothing could be further from the truth.

Undoubtedly, the patriarchal family is a 'trunk family' in which several biosocial units live together. However, these characteristics are not the determining factors but rather the usual consequences of its distinctive nature. A group reduced to parents and children would have very little chance of survival in an unorganised human environment, and even their material living conditions, barring exceptional generosity on the part of the physical environment, would be abnormally difficult. The son who marries therefore tends to remain close to the parent unit, and it is obvious that he will continue to be subject to paternal authority, without which there would be no order within the whole. It is not impossible, however, for a patriarchal family to have the mere structures of a conjugal family, although this is not the norm.

What distinguishes the patriarchal family from any other is its absolute social autonomy and, consequently, the sovereignty of paternal power, on the one hand, and functional diversity, on the other. The patriarch is the undisputed head in all aspects of collective life. He exercises not only the authority of *the paterfamilias* but also that of a company director and a head of state. He is judge and often priest. Every decision he makes regarding the leadership of the group depends on him, and him alone. In other words, he exercises the absolute power that naturally flows from his biological role, without the partial delegation imposed by any process of federalisation (see Chapter V).

Such all-encompassing power is, moreover, a necessity arising from the very isolation of the patriarchal family, which must perform multiple tasks that, in larger social groups, are entrusted to specialised groups. The conjugal family in our cities is limited to bearing children and raising them to a limited extent. The patriarchal family, by contrast, assumes educational, economic, military, religious and political functions. It is a family, but also a school,

company, militia, parish and, through its leader, the State. It is a Community (see Paragraph 59) reduced to its bare essentials, with no functional distinction other than that which exists between its individual members.

47. The school.

The family, whatever its degree of self-sufficiency, constitutes the child's natural educational environment. In the early years, which correspond to the pre-rational period of his life, the child receives from his parents an upbringing that only gradually begins to differ from simple, everyday care; and this formation leaves a deeper mark on him insofar as his hereditary traits predispose him to receive it. But the family unit cannot, of course, give the child more than it has, nor, consequently, adapt him to conditions of life other than those prevailing within it. Outside patriarchal society, it is incapable of preparing him for his future activities as an adult.

School thus fulfils a need to complement and differentiate the family's educational process. It is an artificial, heterogeneous group whose composition seems to the child—in part, not without reason—to be arbitrary, and whose purpose eludes them to a greater or lesser extent. It is obvious, then, that the school will fulfil its function all the better the more it resembles the family through vertical hierarchical structures: structures which, on the other hand, are indispensable for the proper education of the pupil. However, the teacher – in the broadest sense of the word – finds themselves, from this point of view, in a position of inferiority when compared to the parent whom they replace. Indeed, they possess authority only by delegation, and usually for only a few hours a day. On the other hand, they have the advantage of specialisation. Teaching is a difficult *profession* that demands particular skills and knowledge no longer within the reach of the average person. And the higher one climbs in the school hierarchy, the more indispensable such specialisation becomes. It also lends greater weight to the necessary authority.

School is, therefore, a group that acts as a substitute for and complement to the family; its existence is justified by the fact that the child is destined to function, later on, within a social context different from that of the family unit. Its mission is to prepare the individual for the social role through which they will find their place in the wider community, thereby enabling them to fulfil their potential to the fullest extent on the basis of their bio-psychological capabilities. On the one hand, the individual develops fully, which they could not do if they were maladjusted; on the other hand, the various social groups – and the Community itself – of which that individual forms part can satisfactorily fulfil their respective functions thanks to suitable human 'raw material'. School is, therefore, not only a specialised group but also a differential group. Any unitary and egalitarian conception of education is meaningless. Every social sphere demands, for its future members, the education that corresponds to it. For school to be effective, it must adhere to reality. And social reality is neither Man nor the Citizen, but

the farmer and the bricklayer, the soldier and the doctor, the city-dweller and the country dweller, the future boss and the future subordinate. There is no social life without differentiation, nor, consequently, satisfactory education without selection.

48. The workshop.

Just as it ensures the upbringing of children, the patriarchal family fulfils productive functions which, save in exceptional cases, the conjugal family is not in a position to perform. Alongside the biosocial nucleus, another substitute and complementary group thus emerges, which carries out economic tasks through which its members obtain, by exchange, the consumer goods they require. This is the workshop or its agricultural equivalent: a group of individuals united and organised hierarchically who, together, manufacture a specific product or provide a specific service. Today's industrial enterprise, a complex economic group, differs from the workshop only in its greater scale and a more pronounced internal division of labour.

The structural order of the workshop is no more contractual than that of the family or the school. It stems from the very demands of production: manager, technicians, maintenance staff and workers of all grades – the role and position of each are clearly defined. It is because this has been forgotten and because organisations have been structured according to egalitarian theories drawn from liberal ideology that the few attempts at production communities in the form of cooperatives have almost always failed. To bring together theoretically equal producers and, consequently, to make management dependent on the law of numbers, when ability should play the principal role, is to go against the actual relationships among workshop workers. It is no less evident that the manager cannot, on pain of losing all his effective power, derive his authority from his subordinates, although he cannot exercise it without their consent on pain of destroying the harmony of the group. The authority – and consequently the responsibility – of the manager is essential. Without it, there could be no question of a social group, and the workshop would disintegrate due to a fundamental inability to perform its function.

The workshop – or firm – is, therefore, a group of complementary producers: not an association of the producers who, at any given moment, form part of it. It existed before So-and-so joined it and will continue to exist, barring any accident, after he has left. What is fundamental is the permanent functional structure: what is transient are the individuals who come and go within it. The contractual factor is, in the workshop, more important than in the family, since no one belongs to the economic group against their will, at least in theory. It is, however, subject to the technical demands of production, on which the existence and organisation of the whole depend and which stem from the needs of consumption in a society where the division of labour prevails.

49. The militia.

Neither procreation, nor education, nor production would be possible if the existence and freedom of the groups upon which the exercise of these functions depends were not guaranteed. Barring the very exceptional cases of idyllic coexistence and total isolation, military activities of defence – and, where necessary, of projection – constitute an essential aspect of collective life. The patriarchal family carries them out on its own, as it does the others. The conjugal family is not in a position to do so. It must therefore delegate its natural right in this field, giving rise to a new specialised group – the militia, in the generic sense of the word – made up of able-bodied adult males from all the families concerned, or of paid professionals.

We find in our history a particularly illustrative example of such a process, although it does not originate in patriarchal families. When the Western Empire disintegrated, as we have already seen (Note 38), peasant families—who until then had been isolated and protected by the forces of law and order—had to defend themselves against the bandits who were ravaging Western Europe. They therefore gathered around a hill that was easy to fortify, and their first concern was to organise a militia. Obviously, they did not know how to do this. They therefore sought out a soldier who would agree to take command. He trained the men capable of bearing arms and assigned each of them a place and a role within the military group he led. The order thus imposed on the militia was no more arbitrary than its creation: it was established on the basis of the needs of defence and the available resources, men and weapons. Nor did the iron-fisted command imposed by the leader – the future feudal lord – stem from contractual clauses or fanciful preferences: it was demanded by the combat, during which there was no time for deliberations or explanations.

When the primitive fort grew into a market town, the military unit became more complex without losing its functional unity. The chain of command remained unchanged, just as it still does today in any serious army. However, the troops were divided into small specialised units, based on their craft trades. In rural fiefdoms, the lord's cavalry and the serfs' infantry were differentiated according to each group's capabilities and complemented one another tactically on the battlefield. Later, as the process of federalisation progressed (see Section 53), more complex professional armies were created, which lasted until the end of the 18th century, when conscription saw a return to the medieval militia, albeit on a different scale. In all cases, the problem is the same and is given an identical structural solution. Only the complexity and numerical strength of the militia vary. Its fundamental structure remains unchanged, for the simple reason that the function it performs always entails the same requirements.

50. The parish.

So far in this chapter, we have considered the basic aspects of social life, which is not to say the most important ones. But man is not limited to procreating, producing and defending himself. He has higher aspirations, which encompass the aforementioned functions but go beyond them. Firstly, aspirations of a religious nature. The search for contact with supernatural forces or beings is a constant throughout history, everywhere. We do not rule out the possibility that such a search may take place on an individual basis. It is common, however, for it to take collective forms, which are the only ones of interest to us here.

The family of our pagan antiquity had its own gods, whose priest was the *pater familias*. However, alongside this, the city and the community possessed protective deities whose public worship was gradually supplanted by private worship, until it was finally eliminated with the advent of Christianity. Hence the establishment of a professional priesthood linked to the faithful through vertical structures. At the base of the ecclesiastical pyramid (see Paragraph 62) we find in our Christian world – more solidly structured than others from a religious point of view – a social group consisting of one or more priests or ministers and the faithful: the parish.

Let us make it clear that, despite certain appearances, this is by no means an association. It is true that an individual may join the parish of their own free will and, likewise, at least today, leave it. However, the priestly hierarchy does not arise from a choice but is imposed functionally and authoritatively. The priest is a man specially selected and trained to command by superiors who appoint him to hold this or that position. Furthermore, save in exceptional cases, the individual does not choose his religion: he is born into it and receives, as a child, a religious upbringing that incorporates him into the group regardless of any voluntary decision. From this point of view, the structural pressure of the parish is almost as strong as that of the family, since it has no contractual nature. However, the religious social group suffers, in another respect, from a profound weakness. It does not, in fact, respond to any indisputable need. Procreation, education, production and defence are demands—we might almost say tangible demands—of social life. But the individual can perfectly well develop outside ecclesiastical structures. In the religious sphere, necessity arises from faith, and faith is a subjective phenomenon. Hence the parish, whose structures derive from a superstructure of varying power, possesses stability only to the extent that tradition reinforces individual beliefs and eventually replaces them.

51. The State.

The social groups we have analysed in the preceding pages share a common characteristic: multiplicity. And we shall see in the following section that this

with associations. Except in the exceptional – almost purely theoretical – case of a patriarchal family reduced to a single marital unit, and that of the militia of an embryonic community, there are several groups from each category that we find together within the same social framework. There is, however, in every human community, a group that defies this norm: the one that gives unity to the multiple constituent elements, without which there would be no order of any kind amongst them.

The individual or collective entities that make up any social group must, in fact, each play their own specific role. Their respective functions are complementary. Observation and historical analysis show us that the harmonisation of diverse and interdependent activities never occurs without a hierarchical structure, which implies command. When the human collective is autonomous, it must also, at every stage of social evolution, take unified decisions upon which its affirmation and even its survival depend. Command then takes on a new dimension, of a political nature.

In the patriarchal family, as we have already seen (Paragraph 46), authority naturally centres on the biological head of the family, who assumes all power, including in the sphere of leadership. In more complex, diversely organised groups, the State [1] emerges: an individual or group specialising in the political function—an individual in small, simply structured communities, a group in more complex social organisations. In today's nations and empires, the State constitutes a body with multiple structures but, barring pathological aspects, operates as a unified whole. It cannot fulfil its role, nor therefore exist, without an internal order that ensures its unity, continuity and instrumental effectiveness. Hence its pyramidal structure: the government, which makes decisions, and the administrations, which implement them, extending throughout the social body until they reach its basic constituent elements. The constituent relationships of the State are, consequently, as functional as those of any other social group. To make them dependent on some idealistic theory or on the convenience of this or that constituent element of the community is a contradiction in terms. It is not a question of organising the governing body of society according to personal or collective ideas or wills, but of providing it with the functional structures essential for it to perform its role satisfactorily: a requirement we have already encountered when analysing other social groups.

52. Associations.

Associations also have functional structures, particularly those derived from command, although these are generally less rigid than those of groups

[1])- Cf. Mahieu, Jaime María de, *El Estado Comunitario*, Ed. Arayú, Buenos Aires 1962, and *Diccionario de Ciencia Política*, Book's International, Buenos Aires 1966

social. The difference between the two basic types of groups does not, therefore, lie in their organisation but in their origin. We have already seen this (Note 40): the social group is necessary, the association is contingent. A social group may well be formed through the free will of the individuals who thereby become its members: this does not mean, however, that it does not respond to a need which determines its internal structures, quite independently of any voluntary decision. An association may well be formed by an irresistible urge for fulfilment on the part of its founders: its existence and structures depend exclusively on intentions that might not have manifested themselves, might not have materialised, or might simply have taken a different course.

It is not that associations are necessarily less important than the social group. Most of them do, in fact, tend to facilitate the cultural development of the individual and, consequently, of the community. A sports club enables its members to improve their physical condition and thus plays, on its own scale, a fundamental role in the future of the human race. A literary society provides its members with a shared intellectual capital that facilitates their intellectual fulfilment. Associations thus contribute to the noblest and most beneficial human activities for society. They belong, however, by virtue of their purpose, to the realm of superstructures. On the one hand, they are not indispensable, since the individual has the possibility of asserting themselves independently in the cultural sphere, on the basis of the methodological training provided by school. On the other hand, they presuppose the underlying group structures without which there would not even be human beings. In other words, associations are contingent and therefore secondary structures, whose superstructural activities may prove fundamental and even decisive for the community.

Let us not forget, moreover, that the association, however accidental it may be, stems from man's social instinct (see Section 2). It is not necessary, but neither is it arbitrary. Like the group, it responds to a fundamental tendency of the species. But this tendency towards solidarity is decisive for the social group and merely inciting for the association.

V. COMMUNITIES

53. Definition.

Of all the social groups and associations that we can observe or about which history tells us, only the patriarchal family functions in isolation, without any organic links to any other human community. The others appear to us as integral parts of broader, diverse entities: communities.

To fully grasp the phenomenon and its underlying causes, let us return to the example already mentioned from the early Middle Ages. The Empire has disintegrated. There is no longer any political authority. The troops, now without orders or pay, have turned into bands of raiders plundering the countryside. Isolated on their estates as they were back then, peasant families find themselves defenceless. They therefore gather locally around a hill that is easy to fortify and, as we have already seen (Paragraph 49), appoint a leader capable of organising and commanding a militia. Thus is born the Community that will later become the fief: a group of families linked by a hierarchical structure of military origin which, out of necessity for defence, encompasses all areas of collective activity. Once their internal order has been consolidated, these communities begin to clash with one another. In each region, the most powerful imposes itself on the others and unites them under the authority of its lord. From this process emerge more complex communities, with two-tiered vertical structures. Subsequently, and in the same way, the great fiefdoms are united into the dynastic communities of the Ancien Régime.

At the same time, some of the feudal villages, for one reason or another, came to have a larger population than the others and developed into market towns. The division of labour, which had hitherto been in its infancy, then began to grow. In each market town, craftsmen from a wide variety of trades emerged. Those engaged in the same activity naturally came together on the basis of their common interests. Hence the guild, which on the one hand linked up with other local craft organisations and on the other joined the federation of its trade, which was structured within the framework of the second-tier community.

It is not our intention here to analyse in full the complex process whose broad outlines we have just sketched, but rather, by means of an example, to illustrate what a community is – a federation of social groups and/or associations organically united by a common interest – and to define the two types to which it may belong. A community, in fact, is homogeneous – like a guild – when it brings together social groups or associations of the same nature, or heterogeneous – like a borough – when its constituent elements differ in terms of their purpose.

54. The clan and the 'gens'

The simplest form of community is that which arises from the numerical expansion of the patriarchal family. This, in fact, already occupies an intermediate position between the complex social group and the community. It is a group insofar as its members live together under a single immediate authority, the paternal nature of which does not change with the proliferation of marital units. It is a community because it is composed of groups which, unlike those constituting a company, for example, are not complementary. When the number of units increases to the point where coexistence is no longer possible, some of them, whether isolated or grouped together, break away from the basic unit and operate with their own hierarchy. The

patriarch retains supreme authority, but exercises it only in the sphere of political leadership. We are then dealing with the clan.

The blood-related community is the favourite subject of sociologists belonging to the 'primitivist' school. Unfortunately, they are always determined to prove at all costs that higher social forms necessarily derive from lower ones. They thus disregard the Scottish clan, for example, in order to seek out morphological archetypes amongst the Papuans. Hence their insistence on the totemic clan, that is, the group of families that recognises a particular animal or plant as the ancestor of the lineage. It is obvious, however, that such a belief has no bearing on the fact itself. The clan is not totemic because its members worship or venerate a totem. One might just as well speak of a Catholic clan. What characterises this type of community is the common biological origin, that is to say, its social organisation based on kinship. Whether the clan is endogamous or exogamous, whether the recognised filiation is matrilineal – in some primitive peoples who are unaware of the male's role in procreation or in polyandrous societies – or patrilineal, these are merely nuances of greater or lesser importance which do not alter the fundamental nature of the matter.

The clan chief possesses sovereign political authority only to the extent that the community enjoys autonomy. In a situation of dependence on a higher power, his hierarchical powers are confined to the sphere of the group's internal relations. Such was the case with the Roman *gens* and its equivalents in Aryan India and Greece. We have already mentioned (see Note 45) that 'pater' originally had the same meaning as 'king'. The *pater familias*, head of the *gens*, no longer exercised any political power, however. Yet in classical Rome he continued to rule supreme over the internal life of his clan. Only gradually was his authority reduced to that of head of a family-trunk. The subordinate clan, in effect, can be nothing but a remnant. By absorbing it, a wider community inevitably destroys it, for no duality of absolute power survives for long.

The situation is quite different for a clan that continues to grow demographically without losing its autonomy. Once the population reaches a certain size, blood ties lose some of their significance in favour of purely political structures. The clan then transforms into a tribe, with or without hereditary power: a group of matrilineal families or marital families on an equal footing under a single sovereign authority.

55. The feudal community.

Whilst the clan is based on blood ties, the fief, as we have already seen (Note 53), arose from the need for a group of families to defend themselves. Once the formative stage is over, we find it established, by the early Middle Ages, as a family whose head assumes all public power and a certain number of serf families. In its early days, the fief is fundamentally a military community. Defenseless peasants in an anarchic society place themselves under

the command of a warrior who organised them into a militia. And since all the activities of the group were vitally subordinate to defence, the military leader *ipso facto* became a political leader, judge and administrator. The serf (the word *servus* means 'guardian') cannot leave the community, as his departure would weaken it, but he cannot be expelled from it either, as this would put his life in danger. Over time, the fiefdoms federated into more complex communities. The lord continued to perform his duties, but as a delegate of the sovereign.

Like the patriarchal family, the feudal estate is self-sufficient, and the lives of its members, at least in the early period, are strictly communal. The land is collectively owned (see Paragraph 157) and its produce is distributed regardless of individual or family output. The lord receives a tithe – a share of the produce or, later, its monetary value – which is the exact equivalent of our taxes. Over time, once the danger posed by the collectivist way of life we have mentioned had passed, families tended to gain greater independence, particularly from an economic point of view. But the essence of communal life in the feudal system would endure until the end of the 18th century and beyond.

The encomienda system established by Spain in the Americas was quite similar to feudalism, though it had a different origin. The encomendero was the head of a family to whom the King had entrusted, for one, two or three generations, the administration of a region populated by indigenous people. Abuses aside—and there are always some—the encomienda was a closed, self-sufficient community whose leader collected the taxes corresponding to his duties.

Although operating under a different legal framework, the feudal system has survived to the present day in some regions of Latin America, and particularly in Brazil. Whilst the lands of *the engenho*, the *fazenda*, the hacienda or the estancia may well be privately or family-owned, the way of life on many of these estates in the last century – and which can still be found in isolated pockets today – was distinctly communal. Economically self-sufficient, save for a few luxury items, the social unit in question consisted of a certain number of families subject to the authority of a resident head family. But the capitalist system, purely theoretical at first, has been gaining ground in this sphere too, just as it did in Russia from the last quarter of the last century onwards. The *plantation owners* have become plain and simple businessmen, replacing service with profit as the supreme value.

56. The slave-owning society.

There is often confusion between serfdom and slavery. The two types of dependent relationship have, however, nothing in common in terms of their underlying principles, although, in practice, the communities based on them may appear similar. The serf was part of a closed social group, within which he had obligations and rights. He was not dependent on the lord

but rather of the fiefdom whose head was the lord. The lord performed the political functions essential to the survival and, eventually, the development of the community, to which he too was bound by obligations and rights. The slave, on the other hand, is the property of his master, on the same terms as a domestic animal. This is understandable in the context of antiquity, for the slave was, at that time, an enemy, defeated on the battlefield, whose life was spared in exchange for his labour. Not so in the Americas, where slavery stemmed from the slave trade, with Africans bought from their chiefs in Africa and sold outright to those who acquired them as labourers.

Whatever its origins, the abnormal and, therefore, unacceptable situation of the slave's absolute dependence nevertheless created a social order very different from that described to us by the abolitionist propaganda of the last century. Indeed, the harsh exploitation suffered by the proletarian in the capitalist enterprise did not exist in the slave-owning community. The slave occupied a place within the family of which he became a part. He was regarded as a minor, like women and children, ranking just below them. They contributed through their labour to the maintenance of the community, without receiving any contractual remuneration – just as women and children capable of performing productive work did not receive any either – but they were guaranteed shelter, food, clothing and protection until their death. The master could mistreat the slave, just as he could mistreat the wife and children. But this was not the norm, precisely because he was regarded as a member of the family, and furthermore, with the development of the capitalist mindset, because he constituted an asset with a market value. It is highly telling to observe, through reports in Brazilian newspapers featuring former slaves, how they unanimously miss their life prior to abolition.

Unlike the feudal system, therefore, the slave-owning community was – and still is, since it has not entirely disappeared, not even in Latin America – a semi-patriarchal family comprising a head household and subordinate households with no blood ties to the former. To the hierarchical structures derived from sex and age were thus added relationships of the same nature but based on inequality of status and, generally speaking, especially in the Americas, on ethnic inequality. It was, therefore, a natural social order insofar as capitalism had not introduced a pathological factor—profit—into relationships of coexistence that were not entirely satisfactory but which nevertheless met the demands of the community in question and its members, including the slaves.

57. The municipality.

With the exception of a few surviving examples, the communities we have analysed so far belong to the realm of history. The municipality, on the other hand, is a reality of the present day, although it has lost much of its former vitality over the last two hundred years. It came into being in the West when, having overcome the chaos of the early Middle Ages, the towns incorporated into the fiefdoms obtained charters

that granted them a degree of self-governance within the community. In other regions, where feudalism had never existed, they emerged simply as a consequence of the need for closely interdependent families to organise their inevitable communal life.

In all cases, the municipality fits the same definition. It is a primary, autonomous community or, more frequently, part of a broader federative whole, encompassing all the social groups and associations that coexist within the same territory: families, first and foremost and sometimes exclusively, but also workshops, schools, parishes, clubs, etc., that is to say, all the basic units which, by virtue of their geographical location, necessarily maintain close ties and share common interests. Except in large cities, where the neighbourhood—whether regulated or not—represents the basic community unit, the municipality constitutes the most lived-in geosocial community, for within it social structures are tangible, hierarchical requirements are obvious, and the general interest is generally evident in an indisputable manner.

It is not, therefore, a matter of an association of groups, despite certain similarities, not even when families of settlers come together to create a new community on previously uninhabited land. What defines the association is not only the voluntary membership of its members, but also the fact that its formation cannot be avoided. The basic groups of the municipality may, of course, go their separate ways or fail to come together. But if they live together, the existence of relations between them does not depend on anyone's will; in other words, they are natural structures. Mere coexistence—or rather, mere juxtaposition—creates the municipality, without any choice whatsoever. Anarchist theorists themselves acknowledge this.

The municipal community, however, loses its natural character when its population grows to such a size that direct contact between all its members becomes impossible. To meet the needs of social order, today's cities should be second-tier communities, situated above organised neighbourhoods. The small scale of horizontal structures is, in fact, the condition for self-government. If everyone knows one another and the general interest is clearly visible, the organically elected representatives of the population can participate effectively in municipal administration and even, indirectly, in the appointment of its authorities. In a large city, such a procedure would take on an unacceptable democratic character.

58. The province.

Municipalities are situated within a given territory, just as are the groups and associations that make up each of them. However, the territory in question is not defined by the boundaries of immediate coexistence, as is the case with the basic community. With rare exceptions, municipalities follow one another in geographical space without any break. To federate some of them to

form a province therefore seems, at first glance, arbitrary. And it would indeed be so if the aim were to establish a mere administrative unit in the manner of today's French department. But the province corresponds to a very different reality.

Two municipalities may, in fact, be adjacent yet have absolutely nothing in common, save for a boundary line that separates them without linking them. Geography, incidentally, plays a fundamental role in the demarcation of the province. On the one hand, the province is not conceived of as a discontinuous territory. On the other hand, the terrain either facilitates or hinders human settlements and shapes geopolitical structures. But this is a passive role, at least in terms of its direct impact. Nor is it the population that defines the second-order geosocial community. It is true that, generally speaking, there are ethnic, linguistic, religious and other characteristics within the province that give it a certain human homogeneity. But this is not always the case, whilst we almost always find distinct provinces with identical characteristics.

In reality, the province is the result of a political process. The common superstructures – customs, legislation, beliefs, etc. – are the effect, not the cause, of communal life, even though it is these that tend to attract the most attention. The second-degree geosocial community was created through the federation of municipalities around a central nucleus. It was the result of a movement towards concentration which, only in a few cases, came about by mutual agreement, under the pressure of a common danger. Generally speaking, the union was the work of a federator endowed with sufficient power – inherent in medieval Europe, delegated in Spanish American territories – to impose a unifying government on the municipal forces. Whatever the particular circumstances of its birth, the province was always constituted as a creation of history, and it was history that gave it its organic nature.

Indeed, the imposition of power, firstly, and the very necessities of communal life, secondly, created over the centuries such strong interconnections that they were even able to outlive their original causes. In France, for almost two hundred years, the provinces have had no political existence. Nevertheless, they continue to exist as customary communities centred on their ancient capitals, which the departmental capitals have been unable to displace as centres of social attraction.

The province is not, therefore, a natural community like the municipality, but a historical entity. This means that it might have been different from what it is if the balance of power had been different from what it was, but that its structures are shaped not by any collective will, but by the irreversible course of history. The province is not immortal, of course. But, as a product of history, only history can wipe it off the map.

This very historical character means that the province is not as easily governed as the municipality. For its constituent parts, in fact, the second-tier community does not appear to be a necessity in the full sense of the word. Just as its creation was not inevitable, so its continued existence is not self-evident. The social groups and associations that make up the municipality can only choose between community life or chaos. The municipalities that make up the province have the theoretical possibility of seceding from it to join another federation of the same nature. Hence, the province cannot normally be governed by an authority drawn from the municipalities. Whether autonomous or subordinate, it requires a genuine State that embodies a historical purpose (see Paragraph 130) beyond the scope of basic communities.

59. The Community.

The historical process of federalisation did not stop at the provincial level. Indeed, as early as the Middle Ages, we see the formation of third-level communities uniting provinces through the imposition or projection of a dominant political power. This brings us to what we now call the nation, with its four-tiered pyramidal structure: groups and associations, municipalities, provinces and the Community. If we consider its basic constituent elements, the social organism is reduced to a complex of biological, economic, religious, cultural and other cells, each of which has its own order that is to some extent opposed to that of the others, yet which remain united by bonds of solidarity stronger than their antagonisms. But the unifying synthesis of these cells is not achieved directly but through the smaller territorial communities that we have already analysed. The State, the governing body of the Community, does not deal with social groups or municipalities, but with provinces that encompass the municipalities constituted by social groups. In this way, natural and historical structures are respected, without which the Community would take on an artificial character and the State would lack organic effectiveness.

It should be noted, however, that the Community – with a capital C – is not strictly defined by its position on the federal scale or by its degree of complexity, but rather by its autonomy. **A Community is any social entity that is entirely in control of the decisions it makes through a sovereign power of command**. Thus the patriarchal family, the primitive fiefdom, the province prior to its incorporation into a broader social entity, the nation and, as we shall see in the following section, the empire.

We use the term ‘nation’ to conform to the common parlance of our time. From an etymological and historical perspective, however, the word is inaccurate. ‘Nation’ refers to the cultural heritage that a person receives from their ancestors at birth, and which is generally expressed through language. Until the end of the 18th century, the term referred exclusively to a linguistic community, regardless of political borders. The community was, at that time, of a dynastic nature and its boundaries corresponded to the sphere of application of sovereign power.

There were subjects of the King of France 'of Provençal nationality' or 'of Germanic nationality', and subjects of the King of Sardinia and Piedmont 'of French nationality'. With the spread of the principle of nationalities—according to which a single state must govern all the members of a nation and only them—the political community began to merge with the cultural community, though without entirely succeeding. It is certainly misleading to refer to multinational communities such as Czechoslovakia and Belgium, or to parts of the same nation such as the various Spanish-American communities, as nations. Nevertheless, by creating a new tradition, a shared history tends to confer the characteristics of a nation upon communities that did not previously possess them. Such is the case with Argentina, originally part of the Spanish-American nation, which has gradually distinguished itself since the last decades of the nineteenth century to acquire, particularly through the transformation of its ethnic infrastructure, a national identity of its own.

60. The empire.

We have just seen that, despite the principle of nationalities and democratic centralisation—which tends to eliminate all diversity—there still exist today social entities that encompass, under a single state, several cultural communities. We also find countries, such as Portugal and Russia, which have under their rule territories populated by races different from their own. And others, such as Switzerland, the United States and Brazil, which comprise politically organised units operating autonomously, whose respective states are subject to a federal power superior to them. If we look back through the centuries, we encounter the colonial empires of Great Britain and France, the Spanish Empire, the Holy Roman Empire, the Carolingian Empire, the Roman Empire, and so on. And we will not be surprised to find that dynastic communities such as France under the Ancien Régime were often defined in the official texts of the time as empires.

The flawed contemporary terminology of sociology and political science has led us to use the word 'empire' as a synonym for a major power, or to refer to it exclusively as the result of a process of conquest. Nothing could be further from the truth. The term has a purely structural meaning. It is correctly applied to fourth-order communities, that is, to federations of national communities. The perfect empire is one whose constituent units are politically organised as federations of provinces (or counties, as they are called in the United States). But Belgium is an empire, for although its constitution recognises only provinces, the Flemish and Walloon national communities that constitute it possess solid structures and, in linguistic terms, are recognised as such. And Switzerland is an empire because its cantons, despite having a provincial structure, enjoy considerable autonomy backed by a long tradition.

The aspect in which empires differ most structurally is that relating to central power. Sometimes, in fact, the State belongs exclusively to the imperial Community, heading several communities situated from the

political standpoint on an equal footing. Such was the case, for example, with the Holy Roman Empire: the emperor stood above all the constituent units, even though he belonged to one of them. In the Austro-Hungarian Empire, by contrast, the monarch belonged to the German community, which thus held a leading position in relation to the others. The same situation is found in the Roman Empire and in colonial empires. The difference logically stems from the manner in which the two types of community in question were formed. If the empire is the product of a process of federalisation carried out by a community that has gradually incorporated previously autonomous territories into its domain, it is natural for that community to impose its own state as the governing body of the whole. If, on the contrary, the empire came into being by agreement between the parties, it is normal for its state to be independent of all the units it federates, with none of them having any reason to occupy a position of preference.

61. The trade union.

We have seen above (Paragraph 57) that the municipality, the basic community of all broader geosocial units, is made up of groups and associations with the most diverse functions, united within a small geographical area that compels them to interact. This does not mean that these social units are linked indiscriminately, regardless of their respective natures. On the contrary, the strength of the bonds we observe between them varies from mere submission to a common authority to the closest interconnection. Among some, relations do not go beyond those required by membership of the same community. Among others, there are direct contacts arising from exchange, feelings, affinities or shared particular interests.

Let us first consider socio-economic groups. They all have similar or complementary functions: they provide the population with the goods and services it needs. If they operate in isolation, left to their own devices, their only interactions will stem from the competition between them. For firms in the same sector will vie for customers, and firms in different sectors will struggle to absorb as large a share as possible of the purchasing power not necessarily allocated to satisfying this or that need. Chaos will reign, and the groups will expend a great deal of their energy resisting the negative pressure of unresolved antagonisms.

In this field, as in others, natural social law nevertheless demands that solidarity take precedence over conflict (see Paragraph 11). It should come as no surprise, then, to find that workshops within the same trade would come together in the medieval town to form a guild, charged with regulating relations amongst its members, first and foremost, and between them and the rest of the community, secondly. This is not a mere contractual association but an organic whole, with vertical structures extending both upwards and downwards, in which the demands of the common activity—and not the sum of individual wills—determine the laws of

coexistence and ensure that the community respects their rights. The guild naturally possesses legislative and judicial power within its sphere. It constitutes a homogeneous body which, as such, forms part of the municipality and participates, through its representatives, in the government of the basic socio-geographical community. As unresolved antagonism between the guilds is also undesirable, it is logical that they should form a confederation, always within the municipal sphere.

The same problem arises and the same solution applies, in natural law, when we consider geosocial communities at other levels. The trade associations of the various municipalities federate, by sector, within the province; those of the various provinces within the nation. And the trade associations of all sectors, in turn, confederate in the same way. Economic and social structures thus accompany, in their federative process, the geosocial structures within which they manifest themselves. This does not mean that they are to be confused with them. By encompassing the municipalities, the province, for example, *ipso facto* includes the trade associations, but only to the extent that these form part of the various basic territorial communities. If provincial authorities focus in particular on the economic and social activities taking place within their jurisdiction, they will be interested in the trade union federations and the corresponding confederation represented before them. Thus, an economic and social pyramid overlays the basic geosocial pyramid. And it is certainly not the only one in this case.

52. The Church.

The structural framework we have just outlined for the guild also applies to the Church, an intermediate community comprising the faithful of a single religion. Parishes are grouped into dioceses, which cover one or more municipalities; several dioceses form an archdiocese; and several archdioceses form the Church, headed by a primate, which corresponds to the Community. We are using Catholic terminology here, but the reality is the same, with greater or lesser rigidity, for other denominations. It appears, therefore, to be a structural pyramid of the same type as that of the guild.

Any Church, however, poses a sociological and political problem far more delicate than those arising from the existence of other intermediate communities. On the one hand, it is indeed part of the Community and must be subject to its State, lest the unity of the whole be undermined. Yet, due to the supernatural nature of its aims, it considers itself not to be subject to human law, and it is not uncommon for it to seek to impose its authority upon the political power. On the one hand, the distinction between the spiritual and the temporal is never very clear, and there is no shortage of overlapping areas, such as education. On the other hand, neither can the Church remain unconcerned with political life, as it depends on it as an intermediate community, nor can the State grant autonomy to spiritual life, since this forms part of the superstructures of the Community.

The problem is relatively easy to resolve when it comes to autocephalous Churches, that is to say, those whose sphere of influence is the Community itself or part of it. The ecclesiastical hierarchy then coincides with the socio-geographical hierarchy or with one of its constituent elements, and the Church acts like any other intermediate community – albeit a little less compliant – with the privileges that correspond to it.

With the Catholic Church, the difficulties are far more serious. Indeed, the intermediate community formed by the faithful belongs both to the Community – and is therefore dependent on the State – and to the universal Church, which possesses its own sovereign authority. There is no fully satisfactory solution to this problem. The separation of Church and State can either turn the ecclesiastical hierarchy into 'a state within a state' or allow the political power to curtail the privileges of the spiritual community. The concordat is nothing more than a mere compromise, which makes sense in terms of relations between the Papacy and the State but not between the State and the intermediate ecclesial community. What remains is the system of patronage, whereby the Head of State receives from the Supreme Pontiff a delegation of power regarding the internal ecclesiastical structures of the Community. Whilst not entirely satisfactory, this is, without a doubt, the best solution. For it mitigates, as far as possible, the disorder that inevitably arises from any hierarchical duality.

63. Federalism.

It hardly needs mentioning, following the natural intermediate communities we have just analysed, that associative federations sometimes unite contractual units. For they are always constituted, albeit with less rigour, according to the same pyramidal structure already defined. Institutions such as the armed forces and educational organisations have other characteristics; from an anatomical point of view, they bear marked similarities to intermediate communities, but physiologically they respond to different realities. We shall discuss these in the following chapter.

What remains for us to examine here is the natural relationship between the Community, whatever its scope, and the intermediate communities that make it up. It is evident, and we already know (see Paragraph 53), that there is no federation without a federator and that, therefore, even from this partial perspective, the Community depends on its State, that is to say, on the governing body which imposes upon the constituent elements of the social body the unifying intent without which the whole would disintegrate. Through the State, the social organism thus exercises a function of command over its parts. This is what the structural system known as federalism entails, without which the Community would become an inorganic conglomerate of social groups and associations.

Through federalism, in effect, society recognises, supports and, ultimately, fosters the internal autonomy of the intermediate communities within its scope. Aware that each of these communities represents far more than the sum

of their constituent parts, a healthy state seeks to unify powerful forces and thus gives intermediate communities the opportunity to assert themselves fully. They cannot do so unless they possess the rights befitting their nature—*privileges* in the true sense of the word, that is to say, the specific laws they need to develop to their fullest potential.

These privileges—the set of rights and obligations specific to each intermediate community—do not in any way conflict with federal authority, nor vice versa. The freedoms they entail are, in effect, powers relating to the functioning of the subordinate social entity. And this entity is integrated into a complex organic whole that multiplies its possibilities whilst benefiting from them. Hence, any assertion of freedoms against the higher order weakens the organism and, consequently, the anarchising entity itself, whilst any centralising curtailment of freedoms by the higher authority weakens the subordinate entity and, consequently, the organism itself. In both cases, we are faced with a pathological phenomenon.

VI. SOCIAL STRATA

64. Definition.

The social forms we have analysed in the two previous chapters correspond to human groups endowed with a life of their own, whether cellular or organic. They are not the only ones found within complex communities. For in these communities, not only does a functional differentiation emerge that specialises social groups and intermediate communities, but horizontal structures based on shared characteristics are also created. This phenomenon is already evident among the members of basic groups: in the village, men, women and children come together by category, apart from the family groups to which they belong, to carry out certain activities specific to their sex or age. But it is at the level of the biosocial group that stratification takes on significance for the community. Indeed, families which, due to their biopsychic characteristics or the roles performed by their heads, are situated on the same hierarchical level, resemble one another in their way of life and share common interests. It is natural, therefore, that regulated or customary relationships should be established between them, uniting them, not to mention the endogamy which legitimately and inevitably results from their coexistence. Hence the social stratum, which is all the more differentiated the more complex and, consequently, the more hierarchical the community is; this stratum is in turn generally divided into sub-strata, with the least hierarchical of these situated above the most hierarchical of the immediately lower stratum, if there is one.

Even setting aside its potential pathological aspects (see Paragraph 181), social stratification can be viewed from various perspectives, depending on the criteria chosen by the observer, without there necessarily being a complete overlap between—

There is a discrepancy between the results of the various analyses. Functional stratification and qualitative stratification, for example, do not always coincide entirely. In multi-ethnic communities, castes rarely coincide absolutely with functional and qualitative strata. Furthermore, the political ruling minority and the constituted bodies, which are the products of individual selection, are *sui generis* strata, numerically small, arising in part from factors unrelated to the previous types of stratification. Social strata – and the minorities that emerge from them – resist any attempt at schematisation. For they are defined by their superiority, but this can be approached from various overlapping and equally valid criteria of value. This does not, of course, prevent such a community from recognising or regulating strata of a certain nature, which thus acquire a predominant structural importance.

Whatever its basis, every social stratum has a scale of values rooted in its founding principles, customs, ideas, beliefs, etc. – that is, its own superstructures – which profoundly influence social interaction and, consequently, the social order. Nothing could be more absurd, then, than indiscriminately applying abstract or generalised legal norms to all members of a community. Whilst it is true that the superstructures of the highest social stratum – the ruling class – tend to impose themselves, to a greater or lesser extent, as the psychological norms of the whole, the particularities of ethnic, functional or cultural origin do not disappear as a result. To ignore them would be to deny an essential aspect of reality.

65. The social stratum.

Of the various types of social strata that historical observation and analysis enable us to describe, the most common is that which arises from shared identity or similarity of function. In order to fulfil their proper role within the Community, human beings generally have to act within a functionally specialised social group – or directly within an intermediate community – whose members perform complementary and, for that very reason, different functions. The individual is, therefore, and as we have already seen (Paragraph 40), bound by functional ties to other members of the cell or community in question who perform functions distinct from his own and from whom he is, and feels himself to be, different. It is therefore only natural that, outside the fundamental unit of the group or community, such an individual should maintain contact with those who, in other social groups or intermediate communities, perform functions of the same or a similar nature, with whom they are united by the same background, the same way of life and identical concerns. The stratum thus constituted – the social class – does not perform any functional activity, but is based on the common functional activities that its members each carry out individually in intermediate groups or communities, outside of which they would not be what they are.

Since each of the individuals in question, with a few exceptions, heads a family group whose other members share their way of life, it is natural that the aforementioned interrelationships should extend to the latter. The social class thus becomes a biosocial stratum, governed by the system of open endogamy. Birth potentially confers the position, but the position obtained through exclusively personal merit incorporates its holder into the corresponding stratum. Even in cases where recruitment is theoretically based on mere individual selection – for example, the mandarinate of old China or the current Soviet technocracy – there is a clear tendency towards endogamous preservation, if not, pathologically, towards outright closure. None of this applies, of course, to the Western Catholic clergy if it is considered a social class, as it was under the Ancien Régime. But we believe that, at least nowadays, it corresponds more to the definition of a constituted body (see Paragraph 74), which renders our reservation moot.

Social stratification is found in any society as soon as it emerges from the patriarchal or tribal stage. The early Middle Ages distinguished between lords and commoners; the Middle Ages added artisans to this; the Renaissance saw the emergence of the robed bourgeoisie and the *intelligentsia*, which was becoming separated from the clergy. These examples allow us to pinpoint a fundamental aspect of every social class: the principle of stratification is not the functional level but the type of function. The powerful prince and the poor nobleman both belong to the nobility; within the guild, the master and the journeyman form part of the same social stratum. Wealth, of course, plays no part whatsoever: it may stem from the function; it never determines it. Nothing could be more opposed to our pathological class system (see Paragraph 181) than functional stratification.

Initially spontaneous, class-based relationships become customary once the social stratum becomes established as a tradition. This gives rise to a set of rights and obligations that the State tends to regulate. Hence the statute governing the composition, privileges (*privae leges*) and, eventually, the internal hierarchy of the class, which serves to complement the community's privileges. There is nothing extraordinary about this dual affiliation of the family group. The cell of living matter, too, belongs both to an organ—a functional element of the organism—and to a tissue, a category derived from the function performed within one or more organs. This is, as always, merely an analogical comparison.

66. The aristocracy.

In every community organised in accordance with the natural order, a class functionally specialised in command stands out from the point of view of social stratification. It is made up of families whose heads hold political office in the intermediate geosocial communities, or in certain categories thereof, and from which the ruling minority of the State is recruited (see Paragraph 72). This is what is properly called the aristocracy.

There is no better way to clarify the concept than to return – once again – to the historical moment when Western European society was reorganising itself upon the ruins of the Carolingian Empire. We have already seen (Note 49) how the peasants, driven by the vital need for defence, gathered at that time around military leaders who assumed full power in their respective villages. Each of these leaders has or establishes a family and, naturally, prepares his son to succeed him. Over time, the fiefdoms gradually federated to form the dynastic communities of the Middle Ages. The market towns became partly independent, but the lords, now acting on behalf of the prince, continued to administer the urban municipalities and the provinces. Hierarchised by vassalage, they constitute, as a whole, an aristocratic social class that monopolises political power. They may well oppose one another as members of the different communities they lead; this does not prevent strong bonds from existing between them, across borders, stemming from their common function and, consequently, from the superstructures derived therefrom.

Every aristocracy, even if its ranks are constantly replenished, forms or tends to form a stable hereditary class. It possesses an economic base that provides it with the material means essential for maintaining its position and preparing its members for their role as leaders. It is bound together by a deep-rooted tradition of service, by its privileges – in the true sense of the word – and even by its own prejudices. The ruling aristocratic minority (see Paragraph 72) is, therefore, nothing other than the emanation of a social stratum already specialised in command, which provides it with solid structural foundations, thereby removing the ever-somewhat artificial character of state organisation. There is no split between the Community and its governing body, but rather a tiered hierarchy that transitions imperceptibly from supreme political authority to autonomous territorial authorities, that is, from the ruler to the local dignitary. Nor is there any possibility of the State being deified, because the distance between it and its subjects is bridged by the social stratum from which the ruling minority emerges, whose members continue to form part of it.

This is why aristocratic regimes are always more popular than egalitarian ones. A community lacking a ruling class naturally tends towards pharaonic rule. It is therefore essential that the minority holding state offices should be supported by a structural base that integrates it into the social body. But it is, of course, important that the ruling class should be functional, that is to say, that it should share in the nature of the state. This is precisely the case with the true aristocracy, which has no other raison d'être than command and constitutes, for the state, a reserve of rulers and administrators. By virtue of its hereditary selection and its training, it is prepared to supply at any moment the leaders that the Community demands, leaders whose appointment will not cause them to lose touch with their social class of origin, nor, consequently, with the people whose framework this class constitutes. For we would be mistaken if we regarded the aristocracy as a class superimposed upon the rest of the population. The word 'class' that we use simply expresses a distinction

qualitative and functional. The aristocracy, insofar as it deserves the name, permeates the people and establishes a hierarchy amongst them, if not in every sphere, then at least at every level. This entrenchment is so strong that in 1939, one hundred and fifty years after the establishment of the democratic regime, more than a third of French municipalities had mayors who were descendants of their former lords.

67. The 'intelligentsia'.

By virtue of its very connection to the state, the true aristocracy always enjoys a status, whether written or customary, and possesses an internal hierarchy. This is not generally the case for the other strata of society, whatever their degree of homogeneity, and even less so for that which, since the sixteenth century, has been situated in the Western world immediately below the ruling class: the *intelligentsia*, comprising families whose heads are engaged in public activities, and often in intellectual professions.

During the Middle Ages, the clergy's duties included not only the celebration of worship but also teaching. In fact, they virtually monopolised intellectual life. It is true that some nobles engaged in creative activities in this field, and we must not overlook the work of the alchemists. However, the former pursued such activities almost as a pastime, whilst the latter occupied a marginal, if not clandestine, position in society. Hence, the clergy constituted a distinct class at that time, a situation which persisted under common law until the end of the Ancien Régime. However, with the Renaissance, philosophical, literary and scientific creation broke free from ecclesiastical control, whilst artistic creation became independent of the guilds. At the same time, with the concentration of state power, the law gained autonomy and developed increasingly. Thus, an increasing number of lay people, whether or not protected by princes, 'made a living from their intellect'. Some would go on to form part of the established bodies of the Community (see Paragraph 73). But what they all had in common, rather than professional interests, were concerns vital to them and demands arising from their very activity.

Unlike the aristocracy, which has now been supplanted or diminished by the class system (see Note 181), the *intelligentsia* has seen a considerable increase in both its numbers and its social significance throughout the nineteenth century and so far in the twentieth century. Theology and philosophy have lost ground, but there are ever more writers and ever more scientists. The liberal professions have expanded their scope, and university graduates are proliferating across a wide variety of disciplines. What contemporary sociology refers to as the 'upper middle class' corresponds, to a large extent, to the *intelligentsia*, which is gradually establishing itself as a distinct social stratum, in opposition to the prevailing social order.

This phenomenon is of exceptional importance given the role that intellectuals play in collective life. It is they, in fact, who create and disseminate a large part of the superstructures whose nature we have already examined (see Section 39) and whose impact on historical development we shall analyse later (see Chapter XVI). Without a dozen or so thinkers from the last two hundred years, today's world would undoubtedly not be what it is. Without the contemporary press, political leadership would, indeed, have very different characteristics from those we are familiar with.

68. The Technicised.

At a level below that of the *intelligentsia*, though not always clearly distinct from it, the twentieth century has seen the emergence and growth of a new social stratum that is also taking on the character of a distinct class. This is the group made up of technicians and their families. There is no word to designate it, since 'technocracy' refers to a pathological situation (see Note 200), and we have no choice but to coin a neologism. Let us, therefore, speak of the 'technicado'.

The professional who routinely applies industrial processes invented by others did not come into existence until well into the age of machinery. The craftsman of old was, to a greater or lesser extent, a creator. Even in the least exciting trades, even when ceaselessly reproducing the same object, the master of the old guilds – and even the skilled worker of the last century – acted in the manner of an artist. He had learnt his technique, but he used it in a constant effort at refinement and, above all, at personalisation: for him, it was a body of living knowledge. Today's technician, by contrast, whether producing items personally in a laboratory or directing the work of labourers in a factory, confines himself to applying, in an impersonal manner, strict, 'prefabricated' standards which he neither always understands nor needs to understand. He is a kind of human instrument, rigidly conditioned for a specific activity.

The technician is thus characterised by his intellectual confinement within a narrow field in which he is not permitted to innovate in the slightest – something he would, moreover, be incapable of doing by virtue of his very specialisation, which lacks a general foundation. Hence, he finds himself socially isolated from intellectuals, who look down on him, as well as from workers, over whom he feels superior. He has no other solution but to seek contact with his peers: the 'technician' emerges.

We are not concerned here with analysing the negative aspects for society of the formation of this new class. Let us note, on the contrary, that it lacks, in itself, any pathological characteristics. It responds to a reality which, regrettable or not, is imposed on its members without their being able to reject it. The functions they perform are necessary under current conditions and it is therefore natural that they should give rise to class structures. On the other hand, the shortcomings that

We are referring not so much to the functions themselves as to the socio-economic system within which they are carried out and the educational process associated with it.

69. The peasantry.

Below the technical class, we find no urban stratum in today's Western world: the class system (see Paragraph 181) prevented its normal formation on the basis of economic functions, which are, however, increasingly differentiated from those of industrial society. Nor did the guilded producers of the pre-liberal era constitute estates, as the corporate structures gave the workshop members such cohesion that a horizontal division among them was inconceivable. When the masters began to feel a sense of solidarity in the 18th century, it was classes rather than estates that began to take shape.

The situation is entirely different in rural areas. Feudal and post-feudal compartmentalisation, as well as the geographical isolation of villages, prevented any significant interaction between peasants from different communities. However, in Western Europe, from the 17th century onwards, an increasing number of families freed themselves from archaic feudal obligations and became economically independent agricultural producers, whilst in the Americas, royal grants and the conquest of indigenous lands led to the creation of family-run agricultural holdings in the hands of 'vecinos'. This dual process intensified in the 19th century: in Europe with the compulsory partition of estates – which ultimately led to small-scale farming – and in the Americas with the immigration of settlers. At the same time, it is true, a landowning bourgeoisie emerged, with serious economic and social consequences. But that is another matter (see Sections 195 to 197).

We therefore find today, despite the process of capitalist concentration that is also evident in rural areas, a genuine peasant class made up of farming families who own the land they cultivate and their means of production. Mutatis mutandis, the condition of these peasants is not very different from that of the serfs of the Middle Ages, since the State has replaced the lord, as is natural. But the feudal community has broken down, only partly replaced by the rural municipality. There is no professional solidarity whatsoever between the independent 'small farmer' and the bourgeois landowner: the former is a producer; the latter, a parasite. Nor is there any solidarity between landowners and farm labourers, who are mere wage earners in the capitalist mould. Their interests, their way of life, and also the peasant tradition which only they preserve to some extent—all this, then, tends to create bonds among independent rural producers that are no longer hindered by a lack of means of communication. We are faced with a genuine social class.

70. Caste.

In an ethnically homogeneous society, function is undoubtedly the main factor in natural stratification. This is not the case in communities made up of diverse

For both the qualitative inequality of these elements and their respective historical positions determine the emergence and persistence of strata based on race: the castes.

Although this phenomenon has occurred whenever two ethnic groups have been forced to coexist—and, in particular, in all colonial empires, whether they practised slavery or not—it is in traditional India that we can best understand the process by which racial strata were formed. It is known that when Aryan tribes invaded India, they encountered an indigenous Negroid population, the Dravidians, with whom they began to intermix, leading to a rapid degeneration of the conquering people. It was then that the white leaders decided to halt the process and divide the population into strictly closed and defined strata based on the degree of intermarriage. And as these strata were unequal, the sociological rulers sought to exploit their qualitative differences by assigning to each the functions best suited to their capacity. Thus, function was associated with race. The caste (*varna*, originally meaning *'colour'*) thus became a *sui generis*, endogamically closed social class.

Hence the four castes of India: the *Brahmins*, with priestly and political functions; the *Kshatriyas*, with military functions; the *Vaishyas*, with economic functions; and the *Shudras*, with menial functions. In principle, the Brahmins were of pure white stock and the Shudras were unadulterated Dravidians, whilst the two intermediate castes were of mixed race to varying degrees. In reality, the ruling caste was made up of families that had already received Dravidian blood, and the lower caste was not entirely devoid of Aryan blood. But, schematically, the stratification was correct. Subsequently, however, ruling minorities from Dravidian peoples conquered during the southward advance were incorporated into the castes, with the result that the ethnic factor gradually lost prominence, though without the basic principle of racial stratification being entirely undermined – as evidenced by current anthropological analysis of the population. It should be noted that the untouchables never constituted a caste, nor are they the darkest-skinned inhabitants of the peninsula. The origin of this stratum lies in the punishment meted out to all those who violated their caste status, particularly through marriage, and who were thus excluded from Indian society.

The caste system is, therefore, the most rigid social stratum imaginable, since its principles are not open to any variation whatsoever, except in the event of a breach of the existing rules. On the other hand, there is nothing more natural than the preservation of races in contact with one another and the functional utilisation of the particular qualities of each. The caste system is the only one that allows, in a multi-ethnic society, this dual outcome to be achieved.

71. 'Status'.

Caste systems have by no means disappeared from the contemporary world. We still find them in India, where they successfully withstand the onslaught of egalitarian legislation; in the remnants of colonial empires; and in the Americas, where segregation stems from the customary—and indeed legal—maintenance of ethnic stratification. We have already seen in the preceding sections, moreover, that social strata tend to reconstitute themselves despite the class system, which is already in the process of disappearing. In the same vein, though with less structural rigour, we must note the emergence, in today's society—and especially in American society—of new strata based on a concept that was hitherto secondary: that of *status*.

The class stratification of the liberal regime does, in fact, define with some precision the two extreme strata—the bourgeoisie and the proletariat—which stem from the prevailing economic system (see paragraphs 181 and 195). But the so-called middle classes, which the theorists of the Manchester School and their disciple Karl Marx regarded as a mere remnant doomed to rapid extinction, have been growing in size and diversity. Far from possessing the relative homogeneity of the two classes proper, they encompass individuals as different, from every point of view, as the managing director of a large industrial firm and the local newsagent; the senior officer and the corporal, the university professor and the schoolteacher, the renowned professional and the shop assistant. It is natural, therefore, that a stratification based on social level—that is to say, on 'status'—should have arisen spontaneously within this group. This is merely a de facto situation, difficult to define due to the innumerable factors that give rise to it, but easy to grasp precisely because of its experiential nature. Each 'status' stratum, in effect, is composed of families who consider themselves socially equal; in other words, those who socialise with one another or, given their characteristics, could do so were they in contact.

In the United States, where, due to the absence of class distinctions, the phenomenon has taken on far greater significance than in Europe and Latin America, sociologists make no secret of the fact that 'status' is established on a predominantly economic basis, and is thus a consequence of the capitalist system. Families who live together or might do so do not share common interests, but they do share a similar way of life, determined by equivalent incomes and evidenced by the same symbols – the make of their car, for example. However, incomes and symbols depend on roles or positions at the same hierarchical level. In this respect, the 'status' stratum is akin to the social class. For in the middle classes, wealth derives from function and not, as in the bourgeoisie, function from wealth. Despite its shortcomings, stratification based on 'status' marks a tentative return to the natural social order.

72. The ruling minority.

We cannot conclude our discussion of social stratification without mentioning, albeit briefly, the group of individuals who, by performing governmental functions or holding senior administrative posts, exercise the political power of the State within the Community. This ruling minority does not strictly constitute a social stratum: its composition is not permanent, it does not include the families of its members, and its vertical organisational structures take precedence over the horizontal structures that characterise every stratum. However, it stems from the ruling stratum, to which its occasional members continue to belong. Hence our interest in it here.

The existence of the ruling minority depends neither on a particular will nor on a doctrine, but on an essential requirement of the state, whatever form it may take. However, the manner in which its members are recruited—and, consequently, its biopolitical nature, that is to say, the relationship between its capacity and its function—varies with the regime. In a society in the making, such as that of the early Middle Ages, leaders emerge – through a dual process of spontaneous hierarchisation and natural selection – from the empirical matching of individual qualities to positions of command. But as soon as the state is organised, it must regulate access to the various functions, thereby conferring a status upon the ruling minority.

If the latter is drawn from a social class specialised in the exercise of authority—that is to say, an aristocracy—everything conspires to endow the State with a body of officials, in the broadest sense of the word, that is as capable as possible: through heredity, education and selection. Far from being the consequence of an illegitimate monopolisation of governmental and administrative functions, and the benefit of unjust privileges, the aristocratic specialisation of the ruling minority is, on the contrary, the result of a rational utilisation, by the State and for the benefit of the Community, of all the resources of biopolitics.

The hereditary selection of the ruling minority, practised for centuries throughout the West with the successful outcome attested to by history, is today opposed by rationalist ideologues, for whom the individual is an abstract concept, equal in rights to any other. How, then, are administrative leaders to be chosen from among so many equals? We resort to competitive examinations, which take into account only the candidates' rote knowledge or, at best, their intellectual abilities. Thus we fall into a technocracy (see Paragraph 200) of a distinctly pathological nature.

73. Constituted bodies.

Functional differentiation specialises not only intermediate groups and communities, on the one hand, and social strata, on the other, but also individuals who, as such, occupy a specific place within social structures and, in particular, within the ruling minority. This does not mean that 'officials', in the strict sense of the word, act in isolation. They are generally integrated into

groups of which they form the leadership. But, in addition to the ties that bind them to their subordinates, there exist among those performing the same function—even at different hierarchical levels—relationships regulated, de jure or de facto, by a statute. We are thus faced with a constituted body.

Although established through common usage, the word 'body' is entirely inappropriate here, as the groups in question have nothing organic about them. They are neither groups nor communities, since their members do not perform their functions collectively but, on the contrary, are scattered across the social entities of which they form part, alongside other individuals who do not enjoy the same status. They are not associations, since membership of the 'corps' is not voluntary but is determined *ipso facto* by the post or activity. Nor, however, are they mere designations without structural reality. The members of a constituted corps are, in fact, subject to a hierarchical order, which is the same as that imposed by the function at its various levels. A major in the army, for example, commands his battalion as a matter of organisation, having his colonel as his direct superior and his captains as his direct subordinates. But he is situated hierarchically, within the officer corps, below all officers of a higher rank than his own and above all officers of a lower rank.

However, not all professional bodies possess the same structural cohesion. Some are rigid in this respect, such as the bodies of officers and the clergy, whilst others – the legal profession, for example – have only a disciplinary hierarchy. And there are certainly those that have regulated structures but do not perform specific functions, such as certain academies.

It follows that organised bodies can be divided into three categories: statutory bodies, whose members hold their rank or post by right, with regulated promotion; bodies of discipline, whose members are subject to a legally recognised common order but are, except insofar as the application of possible sanctions is concerned, on an equal footing; and bodies of honour, which bring together individuals selected, in one way or another, on the basis of their merits in a particular field. The first belong to the State or, at times, to the governing bodies of intermediate geosocial communities, with the exception of the clergy, whose position in this regard varies according to the country and the historical period; the second correspond to the liberal professions regulated by the public authorities; the third arise from mere official recognition, for honorary purposes, of services rendered to the Community.

VII. AMORPHOUS SETS

74. Definitions.

In the three preceding chapters we analysed social groups characterised by morphological structures, that is to say by organic or tissue-like relationships that

always remain firm and constant within their temporal framework. We shall see later (Chapter XVII) that the loosening of such structures precisely defines a pathological state. However, observation and historical analysis allow us to verify the existence of groups of a different nature.

Let us consider a certain number of individuals spread across a given territory and belonging to different organic and tissue-like groups, who share an idea, a feeling or an interest. There is no physical relationship whatsoever between them, but there is a superstructure that can lead them, at a certain moment, to act spontaneously in the same way. We are faced with an amorphous social group: the mass, that is to say, a large number of scattered individuals, but placed, with regard to a certain problem, in similar circumstances.

Let us now observe some passers-by walking down the street. They do not know one another and have nothing in common, save by chance. They find themselves in the same place for different reasons and have different destinations. There is, therefore, no connection whatsoever between them. Suddenly, something unusual happens: two cars collide, or some workmen begin digging a trench. Some of the people mentioned then stop to watch the event. They rub shoulders, united not only by shared curiosity but also by physical contact. On the surface, they are merely juxtaposed. However, under certain circumstances – for example, the intervention of a police officer trying to disperse them – they will react collectively. We are faced with a crowd, that is, a number of individuals gathered in the same place and driven by a shared sentiment or purpose. Once the reason for their gathering has disappeared, the amorphous group in question will dissolve without any lasting relationships of any kind remaining among its accidental members. Of course, not all crowds are as insubstantial or have such a brief existence as the one mentioned. But they all essentially fit the definition given.

We see, then, that amorphous groups fall into two distinct categories. In some cases, we observe superstructural relationships among their components that lack a physical basis; in others, we observe incidental physical relationships with psychological consequences which, due to their fluidity, cannot be considered superstructures. But all lack form and all are composed of mere individuals.

75. The crowd.

It is not our intention in this work to address topics of social psychology. However, when studying the mass and the crowd, we cannot entirely avoid doing so, for amorphous groups, precisely because they lack form, are characterised by the psychological relationships—whether lasting or fleeting—that are established between their components.

As soon as the individual regards himself as part of a mass and thinks in terms of that, he places himself on the level where he is in communion with others. Put another way, the predominant, if not exclusive, factors in their thinking are those they share with all members of the group, with whom they seek or accept to merge. Hence, the mass is situated at the psychological level of its least gifted members and is thus characterised by a simplistic spirit. Incidentally capable of collective emotions and passions, it is generally apathetic and conformist. Gullible, it is swayed by myth and mysticism, never by logic. It is incapable of abstraction. It has little capacity for assimilation and intellectual understanding. Its memory struggles to absorb new information and quickly forgets everything that does not relate to its specific, permanent interests. It believes itself to be infallible and displays intolerance.

The superstructure that unifies the individual constituent elements of the crowd thus expresses, in an irrational and simplified manner, the cohesive factor on which it is based. But the inadequacy of the psychological bond does not affect the natural character of the whole. In itself, the crowd is not pathological, although it may become so (see Paragraph 173). Nothing is more normal, in fact, than the solidarity of individuals who find themselves, from any point of view, in a common situation. And nothing is more normal than the collective expression of such solidarity. The mass constitutes a basic reality of the social order. But this reality is neither unique nor can it be predominant, as we shall see in Paragraph 78.

If the mass is founded on a fundamental aspect of social coexistence, it is obvious that every individual naturally belongs not to one but to several groups of this kind: those based, respectively, on sex, generation, community, religious denomination, social class, profession, purchasing habits, etc. Such multiple membership does not necessarily nullify one's personality, though it does always exert pressure upon it and, to a certain extent, condition it; yet it also shapes it, in terms of its successive expressions, in a multifaceted manner. Put another way, the mass does not consist of complete individuals, but only of partial psychological dynamics which, momentarily, nullify the others or subordinate them. Speaking of 'the mass' therefore makes no sense whatsoever unless its nature is specified. A population group never constitutes a single mass but several, and the individual acts as a member of one or the other depending on the impulse of the moment.

76. The Mass and Structures.

Our previous analysis clearly shows that the mass absorbs the individual, reducing them to one of their psychological dimensions, regardless of the structural framework within which they operate. Barring pathological cases (see Note 173), it neither destroys nor replaces social groups and communities: it overlays them. The individual continues to act as a member of their family, their company, their club, etc., and, through these social cells, of the intermediate communities that federate them and of the Community itself. But, on the sidelines, they form part of various masses that intervene, passively or actively, in collective life. The mass is not,

therefore, a mere superstructural projection of organic structures, but a distinct entity from them, which develops independently and according to its own specific laws.

This does not mean that the masses are entirely devoid of any morphological structures. The individuals who make up the masses cannot, in fact, disregard the social framework that shapes them, as this framework corresponds to their nature and their need to coexist. They act en masse in accordance with who they are, albeit in specific ways. Moreover: the mass is not formed by chance, nor, even less so, on a whim. It responds to a reality which, in turn, rests – in order to project them in its own way or to deny them to the extent that it can – on structural foundations. The mass of adherents to a religion is certainly not to be confused with the faithful organised within church cells and communities, since most of its members have only sporadic contact with these. However, the beliefs that drive it, however distorted they may be, stem from a doctrine whose formulation and dissemination presuppose a structural order. But the masses do not respect this order without which they would not exist: it eludes them entirely. This does not prevent them from exerting pressure on it and, to a varying degree, sometimes imposing themselves upon it. Conversely, the masses may be the subject of an internal process which, without destroying them, draws upon them to create new morphological structures. From the working-class mass of the last century, for example, born as a consequence of a pathological phenomenon which we shall analyse later (see Note 198), trade unions emerged; these have developed within it without fully ordering it, but by influencing all its superstructures.

In both cases, therefore, we are apparently faced with a classic interaction between structures and superstructures (see Note 39). However, the situation takes on very specific nuances here. Mass superstructures are not, in fact, projections of the structures upon which they act. In the psychosocial sphere, they do not express the organic wholes from which they originate or which they give rise to. On the contrary, arising from their operational dissociation, they deny these to a certain extent. They express an inorganic reality, not by destroying the organic – a pathological extreme, as we have noted above – but by dispensing with it. As soon as individuals think and act as members of a mass, they forget their structural ties and cease to abide by the hierarchical order that constitutes the very nature of all social organisation. Hence, the mass cannot exist in isolation. It needs the forms it contradicts. It is a mere negative epiphenomenon, but no less real for that.

77. The leadership of the mass.

Since the relationships from which it arises are exclusively superstructural, the mass has no structures of its own of any kind, nor can it have any, and therefore possesses no hierarchy whatsoever. This does not mean, however, that it is always at the mercy of the anarchic interplay of spontaneous interactions.

By its very nature, a crowd lacks internal regulation. It arises and develops independently of the will of its members, as a mere consequence of the common conditions in which they find themselves. It is therefore possible, in theory, to conceive of a 'chemically' pure crowd whose states and movements are simply the result of individual forces combining at random. In fact, and particularly in our time, large amorphous groups constitute an unbeatable raw material for ruling minorities – legitimate or otherwise – and those aspiring to be so. From the masses, indeed, public opinion arises, an important, though not decisive, factor in social evolution. We already know that, due to its characteristics (see Paragraph 75), the mass is incapable of adopting a reasoned, let alone rational, attitude towards any issue. On the contrary, it behaves like a kind of tape recorder ready to receive any stimulus – image, idea or myth – that is at its level. Hence, public opinion can easily be guided and, to a certain extent, shaped by education and, above all, by propaganda.

Until the First World War, there was only one mass medium capable of influencing the masses: the press, through which simplistic ideas and distorted information reached the literate sections of the population – as is still the case today. Radio expanded the scope of propaganda but added little to the methods of newspapers: the penetrating power of sound could barely create a few simple conditioned reflexes in listeners. The current use of audiovisual media—film and television—alongside the press (which is becoming increasingly illustrated) and radio, has completely transformed the situation. On the one hand, indeed, the audiovisual image imposes itself on the mind, and especially on the subconscious, with an almost irresistible power. On the other hand, the excessive influx of images of this kind overwhelms the intellectual capacity for organisation of most individuals, whose mental defences are broken. In short, Pavlovian conditioning is extremely easy to create.

The minority or minorities that control the media are thus increasingly able to manipulate the masses, and succeed in doing so to the extent that they know how to select the right stimuli and do not encounter passive resistance arising from attitudes that are too deeply ingrained. The mass remains amorphous, but one or more minorities outside it guide it from the outside, effectively imposing upon it a carefully disguised external hierarchy.

78. The crowd.

In some cases, mass gatherings—whether instigated or not—become so tense that they compel certain members of the group to gather in one place. However, very different factors, including legal provisions or customary practices, as we shall see later (Paragraph 80), can also lead to the same outcome: the physical gathering of a certain number of individuals.

From a psychosocial perspective, a crowd—whatever its origin—exhibits the same fundamental characteristics as a mass, but taken to their extreme due to the tangible contact established between its members. The individual who might, if anything, have considered themselves a member of the mass feels—and undoubtedly is—part of the crowd. They think and act as such, with no possibility whatsoever of immediate reflection. Added to this gregarious spirit is the emotional contagion from which arises, as through a kind of biopsychic osmosis, the dynamic unity of a whole that imposes itself almost entirely upon its parts. In two respects, however, the crowd differs from the mass. On the one hand, it is far more emotional and therefore far more versatile. On the other, it gives its members a sense of irresponsibility and a guarantee of impunity. Hence its tendency towards aggression and its incredible capacity for violence and cruelty.

Such similarities and differences explain why the passive masses merely serve as a backdrop to social events, whereas the crowd—active if only by virtue of its very presence—easily becomes an active minority: always fleeting and often accidental, yet at times decisive. Even when in motion, the mass exerts influence only through inertia. It may give or withhold its consent to this or that measure, support or isolate this or that active minority, and nothing more. The crowd, on the other hand, is capable of making decisions and carrying out actions. If, for example, the working-class mass were in a position – which is not the case – to put its myth of the general strike into practice for as long as necessary, it would paralyse any government but could not bring it down. A mob, under the right circumstances, is capable of attacking the security forces and, eventually, of defeating them.

The physical concentration that characterises this latter amorphous group places it, from the point of view of leadership, in a situation very different from that of the former. The mass is unstable in terms of the relationships binding its components, yet it remains, on the whole, identical to itself over time; or, to be more precise, it changes very slowly. It is therefore impossible to move it except through a long process of penetration. This is not the case with the crowd, whose existence and behaviour are essentially accidental. Its control can only be direct and immediate. Whilst the effectiveness of rumours regarding it should not be underestimated, the word of the leader or agitator constitutes the most appropriate means of manipulating it.

79. Spontaneous crowds and regulated crowds.

What we have just said applies primarily to crowds whose members have gathered simply through the convergence of individual decisions, whether prompted or not. It also applies to amorphous groups that arise from disintegration, through a rejection of the vertical structures that previously gave them organic cohesion: a mutinous regiment, for example.

In such spontaneous crowds there may be hierarchical relationships, as we have already seen, but these lack the consistency that would make them factors in social forms. They consist either of accidental leadership, such as that of an agitator, or of the accidental application of a hierarchy of broader scope and different foundations, as in the case of a head of state delivering a speech in a public square. However, there are other physical groups of individuals that fit our definition of a crowd even though they neither form spontaneously nor are entirely devoid of vertical structures.

Let us consider any assembly: one that brings together the members of a club, or one that gathers the members of a democratic parliament. Its members have not come together by chance or through an accidental convergence of individual decisions, but by virtue of well-defined legal rules – whether statutory or statutory – and their actions are governed to a certain extent by internal regulations. Furthermore, they are subject to the authority of a chairperson. Everything would therefore seem to indicate that such an assembly constitutes a social group of the same nature as an association (see Paragraph 52), despite the fundamental aspect in which it differs from the latter: the concentration of its members in a single place. However, this is not the case.

Let us note, first of all, that the chair of an assembly has very limited authority. He or she does not manage the group in the same way as the president of a club. The chair merely directs the debates with the sole aim of maintaining a minimum of physical order. He or she is not empowered to make decisions. At most, he enforces rules previously drawn up or approved by his supposed subordinates. We cannot, therefore, speak here of a vertical structure in the full sense of the term: the relationship between the chair and the members resembles that between a master of ceremonies and the dignitaries to whom he indicates their designated seats at a formal event. On the other hand, and this is the decisive point, the members of an assembly act, from a psychological point of view, despite generally more pronounced internal divisions, in the same way as those of a spontaneous crowd. They operate below their average level and allow themselves to be carried away by irrationalism, demagoguery, verbosity and irresponsibility. Any assembly, even one reduced to a few members as in the case of a jury, therefore constitutes a regulated crowd, differing only in a few secondary respects from a spontaneous crowd.

BOOK TWO

Demology

VIII - POPULATION SIZE

80. The demographic factor.

In the preceding chapters we analysed the various types of social groups from the point of view of the constitutive relationships that characterise them. We thus arrived at clear and precise definitions, but ones that were schematic, abstract and, consequently, unrealistic. For we had to set aside, whilst constantly referring to it, the human 'raw material' of these groups, that is to say, the individuals amongst whom the aforementioned relationships are established. Such an approach was legitimate, but we must now complete our study by addressing, in this book, the demological aspects of concrete society and, first and foremost, its demographic aspect.

Let us consider, as a basic example, the nuclear family. We already know (see Paragraph 42) that it is characterised by the relationships that bind a man and a woman within it, on the one hand, and parents and children, on the other. From a structural point of view, the biosocial group comprising a father, a mother and a child is perfect. So too is the one comprising a father, dozens of mothers and hundreds of children. However, no one would dare to say that these two families are identical, nor that the generalisation of one or the other would be inconsequential. For in the first case, a massive process of depopulation would ensue, whilst in the second, barring an abnormal shortage of men, a profound social imbalance would result due to a lack of available women for the majority of marriageable men. To obtain an accurate picture of a social situation, one must therefore supplement structural relationships with the numerical relationships within which the former occur.

These conclusions obviously apply to all social groups, associations and communities, so we do not consider it necessary to repeat the analysis for each of them. It should be noted, however, that numerical relationships take on even greater significance in amorphous groups. The very existence of the crowd depends on the number of its members. The crowd manifests its distinctive characteristics in proportion to its size.

In complex social groups and communities, population size has a twofold fundamental impact. Firstly, it largely determines the complexity of social structures. Structural relationships, which are simple in a craft workshop or a village of a few dozen families, inevitably become more complex—through multiplication, differentiation and federation—as the number of individuals involved increases. Secondly, the relative power of the group as a whole, and therefore its potential for self-assertion, derives in part from its demographic size. Observation and historical analysis do, of course, agree in showing us that quality takes precedence over quantity. Yet the latter remains, as we shall see later (Paragraph 139), a significant factor in social evolution.

81. *Population density.*

It is within the geosocial community that the demographic problem assumes its full significance. Groups, associations, intermediate communities of a different nature and amorphous groups cannot, in fact, be distributed any more or any less than the existing population within the territorial framework that encompasses them all. Their constitutive relationships, as we know, are not independent of the demographic factor, but the population size that affects them is that of the geosocial community. And this, aside from its absolute value, depends fundamentally, in terms of its consequences, on the territorial space in which it is situated.

Population density—that is, the ratio within a geosocial community between the number of inhabitants and the size of the territory—is therefore the first general aspect of the demographic problem that needs to be addressed. Human beings are not pure spirits. They occupy a specific physical space: not only the space their bodies take up, but also the space they need to shelter themselves and move about in accordance with their nature and stage of development. For their sustenance, they require substances that come directly or indirectly from the land or the sea and thus entail a complementary space. Such requirements determine, for any territory, an optimal population density: that which corresponds to the full utilisation of the available space, on the one hand, and to the full satisfaction of the inhabitants' needs, on the other. Below this density, there is wasted space; above it, unmet needs. In both cases, we are faced with a pathological situation (see paragraphs 184 and 185).

It is clear that the optimal density that can be calculated for a given territory at a particular point in time is not an absolute value. This is because it depends on the relationship between the available space and the level of development of the population. A nomadic tribe with a pastoral economy requires more land to meet its consumption needs than a sedentary group of the same size with an agricultural economy. Modern technology makes it possible to significantly increase soil productivity, reclaim exhausted land, irrigate and utilise the desert, and even produce synthetic food in laboratories, albeit always using raw materials extracted from the soil or the sea. The optimal population density

This therefore refers to the space available at its current level of utilisation.

Such would, at the very least, be the situation in a closed-economy community. Trade does, in fact, make it possible to offset to some extent the opposing variations that arise in complementary communities in relation to optimal density. Even taking their sources of raw materials into account, industrial areas require far less space and a much larger population than rural areas. In theory, the former suffer from overpopulation, as their territory cannot feed their inhabitants, whilst the latter exhibit a density below the optimum, since they produce more food than their inhabitants can consume. However, the federation of industrial areas and rural zones within a single community creates an average density which, whether optimal or not, is always more satisfactory than the indices on which it is based. An identical balance can, of course, be achieved between communities through trade flows. From a purely statistical point of view, the procedure is satisfactory. But demography is not reduced to a series of calculations and shows us that such an international division of labour forces primary production communities to maintain their population density below the optimal level whilst allowing the more industrialised communities to increase theirs above the norm. The average density is thus established at the expense of the former, without the compensation provided by the migratory transfer that occurs automatically between municipalities and between provinces (see Paragraph 124). Communities engaged in primary production are forced to artificially curb their population growth, tolerate and even encourage emigration, and/or suffer unemployment among a portion of their inhabitants.

82. Natural demographic equilibrium: its biological factors.

For humans, optimal population density corresponds to what zoologists call the biological equilibrium of a territory, that is, the numerical relationship that spontaneously establishes itself between the different animal species coexisting in the same space. In the state of nature – which does not necessarily, and certainly not by any means, imply a state of the wild – the human population naturally tends to reach and maintain the demographic equilibrium that results from the optimal density.

Humans have a reproductive capacity far greater than that required for the mere numerical preservation of the species. Every woman has a reproductive potential of around fifteen children which, if fully realised, would result in a growth rate of more than seven to one in each generation. Historical observation shows us, however, that until less than two hundred years ago the population of civilised territories remained stable in numerical terms, with fluctuations that were quickly absorbed. It also highlights the two

natural factors of demographic equilibrium that operated unhindered at that time: disease and famine.

Humans are not particularly well-endowed in terms of biological resilience. In the period under consideration, very few women were in a position to make full use of their reproductive capacity; moreover, infant mortality was high. Nevertheless, the population tended to grow steadily. However, epidemics occurred periodically, reducing it to a level far below its optimal density. The bubonic plague, cholera and smallpox would sometimes depopulate entire provinces and always resulted in significant annual death tolls.

Famine compounded the epidemics, with the same result. In the pre-capitalist era, there was neither overproduction nor underconsumption. Food reserves were scarce or non-existent. Furthermore, means of transport—slow and often non-existent—made it impossible to balance out differences between provinces with varying climatic conditions. A poor harvest in one region was enough to cause famine and, either directly or through a weakened resistance to disease, the death of part of the population. The same phenomenon resulted, even without a shortfall in production, from a rise in population size above the optimal density. The food normally produced was not enough to meet everyone's needs: either people starved to death, or general malnutrition led to a rise in disease and, consequently, premature deaths. This is still what happens periodically in India and in north-eastern Brazil.

83: The natural demographic balance: its social factors.

Despite their positive consequences for the maintenance of demographic equilibrium, epidemics and famines constituted profoundly distressing public calamities. The former were incurable, but the latter could be prevented or mitigated through precautionary measures, which European governments adopted to the best of their ability, particularly from the 18th century onwards. Famines gradually disappeared, and the population would have exceeded its optimal density had it not been for the intervention of social factors which, having operated until then on a smaller scale, increased naturally and spontaneously to compensate for the decline in periodic famine: war, celibacy and emigration.

It is well known that armed conflicts in the Middle Ages, apart from the Crusades, were relatively low in casualties and were no more dangerous for their few participants than any contemporary sport. This situation changed gradually with the introduction of firearms and, above all, from the end of the 18th century onwards, with the use of conscripted armies. Armed conflict then took on the character of a struggle for extermination, culminating, with the Second World War, in the mass slaughter of military personnel and civilians. It turns out that...

It is interesting to note that technical progress, a factor in overpopulation (see Inci-so 185), thus brought about a grim partial offset to its demographic consequences.

Until the early 20th century, however, it was not war but celibacy that constituted the most effective social factor in regulating population levels. Indeed, legally until the end of the 18th century and in practice for a further hundred years, the system of primogeniture granted the eldest son, across all social strata, the ownership and administration of the family estate. Hence, there were many second-born children, both male and female, who did not marry because they lacked the financial means commensurate with their status. The secular clergy and religious orders and congregations absorbed a large number of them. Service to the King and to Malta absorbed others. In short, there was no shortage, especially among women, of those who remained unmarried in the family home, where they were rightfully entitled to their place. This considerably reduced the theoretical capacity for reproduction. Celibacy, as a factor in demographic balance, has almost entirely disappeared in our time, even in Catholic countries.

That leaves emigration, a subject we shall discuss at length later on (see Chapter XI). There have always been population movements towards uninhabited or poorly defended areas; this phenomenon has intensified in our era since the Age of Discovery and, in particular, over the last century, when considerable numbers of emigrants moved from Europe to the Americas and Siberia. Of course, such a balancing factor is not within the reach of all peoples, and certainly not, as a rule, of those most in need in this regard.

84. Demographic composition

Demographic balance does not refer solely to the number of inhabitants in relation to the territory's capacity. We must also consider the population in terms of its statistical composition, that is to say, its breakdown by sex, age and, where applicable, race.

The members of any geosocial community are divided into men and women. Normally, a numerical balance between the two sexes is established spontaneously. More boys are born than girls, but girls have greater biological resilience and a higher average life expectancy. However, natural phenomena – such as in the mysterious case of Tibet – or, more often, social factors – such as a state of permanent war or migratory movements – can give rise to a disproportion that affects the basic structures. With a relative surplus of men or women, the family does indeed, as a rule, adopt polygamous forms. If it does not do so because the situation is accidental and therefore temporary – as in the case of Germany and the Soviet Union following the Second World War – the existence of a large number of individuals forced to remain single creates a series of serious social problems. Furthermore, the gender imbalance can hinder the process of the group's development. This does not occur in the

primitive or degenerate societies, in which men and women differ almost exclusively in terms of their reproductive roles. But as we move up the scale of social values, the distinction becomes ever more profound and affects all the bio-psychological characteristics of individuals. A society of women, in which a few men were confined to the role of reproduction, would lack the creative power essential for its full realisation. A society in which men were abusively dominant would lack not only the capacity for procreation but also the sensitivity essential for achieving even a moderate level of civilisation.

The concept of balance is much more difficult to apply to demographic composition when considered from the perspective of age. In theory, we can say that a society is balanced in this respect when it has the necessary proportion of children—taking mortality rates into account—to achieve or maintain the optimal population density. It is, therefore, a figure relating to a variable factor. However, as we shall see in the following section, a high proportion of children sometimes creates problems, particularly of an economic nature, even when it reflects legitimate growth.

As for race, which will be the subject of Chapter IX, demographic analysis lacks any framework other than a historical one. Indeed, the coexistence within a single community of individuals belonging to different ethnic groups is not natural, although the order established in such a situation may well be so. Any equilibrium achieved in this area will always be temporary and unstable. History has demonstrated this time and again.

85. Active population and passive population.

The above analysis provides us with one of the pieces of information needed to assess an important aspect of the problem posed by population size in relation to the territory, an aspect to which we have barely alluded previously (see Paragraph 81). Our definition of optimal density applies, in effect, to a population that is balanced in terms of sex and age. However, as it is based on an economic relationship, any variation in the demographic composition inevitably affects it.

At a certain technical level, optimal density depends, in fact, on two factors: potential production and necessary consumption. Production varies, on the one hand, with the available land – considered in terms of its extent, its quality and the raw materials it contains – and, on the other hand, with the available labour force. Consumption stems from the population's biophysical needs and, therefore, in a stable social situation, from the number of inhabitants. If we consider the territory as a constant factor, the economic relationship is reduced to two variables: the number of producers and the number of consumers. For a given population, the latter figure is also constant. The former is not.

Under the conditions assumed, the number of producers depends, in fact, fundamentally on sex and age. A married woman – and it is natural for a woman to marry – is not destined to perform economic tasks, and this is all the less the case the higher the level of civilisation and, consequently, the greater the degree of differentiation between the sexes. The relative surplus of women therefore results either in a pathological social situation or in an abnormal reduction in the proportion of producers within the community. The same phenomenon occurs when the proportion of children rises above the demographic replacement rate, or when that of the elderly increases.

Hence the need to consider the relationship, within any demographic group, between the active population – both producers and consumers – and the passive population – solely consumers. It is clear that an increase in the proportion of the latter, whilst the technical level remains constant, leads to a reduction in overall consumption potential. On the other hand, the variable in question leads us to define a concept of useful optimal density, the calculation of which involves not only the territory and the population size but also the ratio between the active and passive populations. Optimal density is therefore that which allows the active population to make full productive use of the territory, whatever the relative percentage of passive consumers.

To arrive at this definition, we have assumed that production techniques remain unchanged. If production techniques are improved, the number of producers needed to meet certain consumption demands is reduced and the optimal useful density decreases, with an increase in the percentage of passive consumers; at the expense, of course, of the rise in the standard of living that would have occurred if, with the same number of producers, production had been increased through better use of the territory.

86. The rate of population growth.

What we have just said applies to a numerically stable population. It is the case, however, that the percentage increase in the number of children and elderly people in a community does not generally result from a reduction in the number of producers – adults – but from population growth due to an increase in the birth rate and/or a rise in the average age. Whether the population is rejuvenating or ageing – and both phenomena can occur simultaneously – there is a shift in the relationship between the active and passive sectors: there are increasingly more consumers whilst the number of producers remains constant or, at the very least, does not grow at the same rate.

A population is said to be rejuvenating when the proportion of children within it follows an upward curve. The phenomenon usually occurs following a demographic catastrophe – such as war or an epidemic – not through biological automatism, as laypeople sometimes believe, but through a complex psycho-social process by which the population seeks to regain its previous density per-

population growth, which can only be achieved through an increase in the birth rate. The same cause produces the same effect when a technical change—particularly if accompanied by appropriate policy measures—allows for a higher population density. Population growth then continues until the desired objective is reached, as also happens in territories undergoing settlement. Such rejuvenation leads to a temporary crisis due to an increase in the proportion of the passive population. But internal equilibrium is restored – or, in underpopulated territories, established – when the optimal density is reached once again – or is simply attained. The situation is quite different when the same phenomenon occurs, due to a reduction in infant mortality, in a demographically saturated territory. However, this is a pathological phenomenon which we shall analyse later (see Paragraph 185).

Population ageing, which also leads to an increase in the passive population, stems from the application of artificial medical procedures that violate the law of natural selection (see Paragraph 192) and increase the average individual lifespan. The proportion of elderly people is increasing, with more serious negative consequences than in the previous case, since the elderly, unlike children, are, for as long as they live, definitively unproductive consumers. This situation is also pathological.

We see, therefore, that in a territory which has already reached its optimum density, the natural demographic rate is expressed by a sinusoidal curve parallel to that representing the evolution of the technical level. Hence, in our time, it is clearly on an upward trend. But the process depends on two factors, which may act independently or concurrently. If the rise is due to an increase in the proportion of children, the internal imbalance—temporary and inevitable—does not disrupt the natural order, though it creates problems. If, on the other hand, it stems from an increase in the proportion of the elderly, the imbalance is permanent, creating a pathological situation (see Paragraph 185). Logically, population growth resulting from a combined increase in the number of children and the elderly, far from resolving the difficulty through compensation, instead leads to the greatest conceivable imbalance, as the proportion of the passive population grows at both ends of the age spectrum. In the extreme, if it were possible to reach it, we would end up with a community of consumers without any production whatsoever.

However, in the case just mentioned, the crisis is only partially temporary, as children will eventually become producers. This is not the case when birth rates fall at the same time as life expectancy increases. For the working population is ageing without new individuals coming in to replace, in the same proportion, those who cease to produce. But this is a subject we shall deal with later (see Chapter XVIII).

87. Demographic pressure.

Not all social groups that make up a community evolve at a uniform rate from a demographic perspective. On the contrary, it is usually the case that certain intermediate communities or social strata grow in number for reasons specific to them, whilst others stagnate or even decline. Groups in an upward trajectory then exert pressure on the others in a process of peaceful conquest of their territory, their sources of supply or their power. This is one of the factors behind internal migration (see Paragraph 124). Groups of differing densities naturally tend to achieve an overall equilibrium through compensation, but this is met with resistance from those who are better off in terms of the existing relationship between production and consumption.

Any social group experiencing numerical growth exerts, by virtue of its population size, demographic pressure on others that are less vigorous in this respect, when the children—the result of a previous rise in the birth rate—reach adulthood. Such a group thus goes through two successive stages. Initially, its passive population grows at the expense of the standard of living. In the second stage, its active population increases, requiring more territory and/or raw materials, in the case of a geosocial community, and in all cases this implies greater power.

Within the Community, demographic tensions are therefore a normal phenomenon. Population size is one of the forces that naturally influence social dynamics (see Paragraph 139). Hence the following contradiction: on the one hand, geosocial communities are logically limited in their growth by the optimal population density corresponding to their territory and technical level; but, on the other hand, an excessive population, from this latter point of view, proves useful as a factor of pressure and, therefore, of self-assertion, and is even essential for resisting external pressures of the same nature. In reality, this contradiction stems from our definition of optimal population density (see Paragraph 81), into which we introduced the factor of maximum desirable and possible consumption. If the degree of satisfaction of theoretical needs is reduced without harming human potential, population density may rise above its optimal level. The sacrifice of a superfluous portion of consumption thus allows for the enhancement of the community's strength, without pathological consequences.

88. Living space.

The above applies, of course, to the autonomous communities in their potential power struggles. Those with a population density exceeding the optimal level seek to restore the balance through emigration (see Paragraph 118) or the conquest of further territory. This can only be achieved through the invasion, whether peaceful or military, of foreign lands with a lower population density.

This observation compels us to supplement our previous analyses—in which we had started from the territory to arrive at the concept of optimal population density—with a new approach to the problem. The method thus adopted is not arbitrary, as it reflects the natural reality of ecological balance (see Paragraph 82). However, we are well aware that one can either define the desirable population size in terms of the available space or calculate the necessary space based on a given population size. In theory, this second approach is more satisfactory, since humans naturally exert influence over their geographical environment. But in practice, it does not always correspond to actual possibilities. The territory of a Community is generally not expandable, although, at times, the usable territory can be extended through new techniques at the expense of previously unusable areas; furthermore, territories with lower population density are not always open to immigration, nor are they necessarily available for a transfer of sovereignty. Hence the armed conflicts which, in certain circumstances, arise between overpopulated communities and others with a population density below the optimum level corresponding, if not to their own technical level, then at least to that of the former.

Taking the population as our starting point, we can therefore determine the territory that is essential for a community to enjoy an optimal population density and, consequently, to be able to fully realise its potential. The possession and, where possible, the acquisition of such a living space is thus a matter of natural right. This does not mean, however, that the realisation of this right is a given, nor that its existence necessarily precludes a right of the same nature that another, less densely populated community might have. Let us not forget, in fact, that optimal population density is relative to the level of technological development and increases with it. An agrarian community, for example, requires a territory that an industrialised one would consider half-empty. In 1941, Germany sought its living space in the Soviet Union, which had a much lower population density. However, the latter country did not have surplus space, as its optimal density was, due to its domestic level of technology, much lower than that of the Reich. Hence a conflict of natural rights, each no less respectable than the other if we set aside qualitative considerations of a different nature.

Germany provides the best example of just how relative the concept of living space is. With a population density higher than that of the pre-war period, its western region has become a destination for immigration: its technological progress has raised its optimal density to the point where its current population is deemed insufficient. Undoubtedly, the internal demographic imbalance, a consequence of the war, contributes to exacerbating the phenomenon. But it is not the sole cause, nor even the main cause, as nations such as Switzerland and Sweden, which remained on the sidelines of the conflict, also import labour.

89. Population regulation.

When a community exceeds or tends to exceed its optimal population density without the possibility – or without the desire – to acquire the living space corresponding to its present and future needs, the only solution available to it for the problem posed by overpopulation (see Paragraph 185) is the regulation of the number of its members. To the natural factors – biological and social (see Paragraphs 82 and 83) – of demographic equilibrium is thus added a rational factor which serves to complement them and compensate for their possible shortcomings.

Voluntary population control is not a phenomenon unique to the 20th century, nor did it first arise as a consequence of Malthus's simplistic theories. The abandonment of the elderly – unproductive consumers – has been and continues to be a custom among many primitive peoples, particularly nomadic tribes forced to move freely in search of their means of subsistence. In ancient China, it was a common and accepted practice to eliminate female newborns in order to reduce the number of future births. Regardless of these examples, it is a well-known statistical fact that in civilised societies, the urban population, for economic reasons, and the more educated classes, out of a desire for enjoyment, artificially limit their reproduction, often with very negative consequences (see Paragraph 193).

What emerges as a consequence of Malthus's work—first in the realm of ideas and subsequently in practice—is population regulation through birth control. Let us note at this stage that the principle and methodology in question are by no means inseparable. Since man is a rational and political animal, it is perfectly normal for him to use his intellectual faculties and his science and art of community leadership to resolve such a serious problem, especially when one considers that this problem arises largely because biological factors affecting demographic balance have been artificially eliminated. Planning tends to compensate for the reduced influence of these factors through the reasoned application of social factors. Nothing could be more natural.

Birth control, on the other hand, whilst it may in certain circumstances—such as in post-World War II Japan—stabilise population size, gives rise to serious qualitative imbalances whose consequences are, in the long run, worse than those arising from numerical imbalance. Through sterilisation, the dissemination of contraceptive methods and devices, and legal abortion, birth control seeks and does, in effect, reduce the proportion of children in the population. Society, therefore, ages. Those who abandon their elderly eliminate individuals who have already fulfilled their function and from whom the community can no longer expect much, that is, definitively unproductive consumers. The reduction in births, on the other hand, implies the elimination of temporarily unproductive consumers, that is, potential producers. From another point of view, control

The birth rate affects above all the intellectually more advanced strata of the population – and, on a global scale, the races with the greatest psychological development – precisely because of the difficulties involved in applying the recommended methods. This leads to a qualitative imbalance with tragic consequences. It would be far more satisfactory to eliminate individuals who are useless for one reason or another. But, curiously, today's civilised people, who regard abortion as normal, are horrified by euthanasia. They keep monsters and the incurably insane artificially alive, yet at the same time prevent healthy children from being born, some of whom have great potential value. There is no worse aberration.

So far, in this section, we have only referred to population control measures aimed at addressing overpopulation. Of course, planning also covers the opposite scenario. Countries with a population density below the optimum have two methods at their disposal to rectify this shortfall: encouraging the birth rate through economic, psychological and welfare measures, as was the case in Italy and Germany before the Second World War, and immigration. The first poses no problem whatsoever. We shall discuss the second in Chapter XI.

90. Population concentration.

In the preceding sections, we have considered the population of geosocial communities in general terms. This approach was valid, as it applied to actual communities, but it did not allow us to address the demographic problem in all its aspects. Population density, as we have analysed it so far, is in fact nothing more than a mere average that can mask internal variations of fundamental importance. For a community consisting of a large city situated in the middle of a desert may yield the same index as another whose population is distributed homogeneously amongst a multitude of small villages, without the respective demographic situations of the two territories being comparable. Hence the need to complement density with the degree of concentration. To gauge the impact of this latter factor on the very structures themselves, one need only look back through our history. In the Roman provinces, the vast majority of the population lived on *estates* – today's farms or smallholdings – grouped into families of varying sizes. The towns were little more than garrison posts, sometimes with the addition of permanent or periodic markets. With the advent of feudalism, peasant families concentrated around forts – the precursors of fortified castles – and formed villages, some of which, following the re-establishment of large territorial units, became market towns and cities centred on craft activities and, later, to a much lesser extent, manufacturing. The urban population grew very slowly until the late 19th or early 20th century, when the capitalist expansion of manufacturing drew a portion of the rural population into the cities; this trend subsequently increased with economic development, which in turn led to greater demand for labour in

the secondary and tertiary sectors and, due to the mechanisation of agriculture, a gradual reduction in the agricultural workforce. In Western Europe, 40% of the population today (1968) is still rural, but in the United States—which is more technologically advanced and less traditional—the corresponding figure is no more than 7%.

In addition to this migration from the countryside to the city, which we shall analyse later (see Note 124), there is an increasingly marked trend towards the growth, within each Community, of certain urban centres that are becoming disproportionately large. The structures of a city with several million inhabitants are clearly not the same as those of a 'large village' of a few thousand. As this issue falls within the field of specialised sociology, it is not the subject of our study. Let us therefore confine ourselves to merely mentioning it.

IX RACE

91. Definition.

Population size, which we examined in the previous chapter, is a fundamental factor in the sociological analysis of any territorial community. Historical observation shows us, however, that it is not the most important one. We are all aware of the role played by tiny Greece as the cradle of our Western civilisation. We must therefore supplement the quantitative study of the demographic problem with consideration of its qualitative aspects and, first and foremost, of the characteristics common to all members of a social group in this field, which depend on race.

Nothing is more confusing today than the concept expressed by this term, which is applied indiscriminately to our species ('the human race'), to broad groups 'of colour' ('the white race') and to each of their sub-groups ('the Aryan race'), to historical societies ("the Italian race") and even to linguistic or cultural groups ("the Latin race"). Undoubtedly, in all cases, there is a vague notion that race is linked to the hereditary factor in humans and that a racial group exhibits a certain commonality of characteristics, transmitted through life, which distinguishes it from others. Yet sociologists have been seen to attribute the inequality of peoples solely to the environment and, consequently, to maintain that all have identical opportunities. Others, whilst arbitrarily asserting the racial homogeneity of primitive communities, have relied on the diversity of types within a given group to deny the current existence of races. On the other hand, anthropologists seem inclined to base their classifications on this or that factor, the choice of which is not justified. In the most favourable case, they consider somatic characteristics, strictly excluding any psychological or even biological factors.

For all these reasons, we need to reframe the issue on the basis of the evidence provided by experience. We do not need theories to establish the reality of race. Everyone can tell a Congolese person from a Chinese person; everyone can perceive the difference between a group of a hundred Swedes and a group of a hundred Spaniards. Everyone also knows that a black person born in New York is just as black as one born in Senegal and that, consequently, some of the characteristics that allow even the least competent person to recognise an ethnic difference are hereditary. The difficulty arises only with the definition of the concept of race. Let us try to eliminate from our experience the factors that distort it. We can achieve this very easily by considering not humans but animals of other species.

Let us consider a number of German Shepherd-type dogs. Why do we say that they belong to a particular breed? On the surface, because they resemble one another. They have the same physical build and display the same psychological traits: medium height, long brown coat, elongated muzzle, bushy tail, courage in attack, intelligence superior to that of most other dog breeds, etc. However, not all German Shepherds are identical. Their height varies by a few centimetres; their coat is more or less long and thick, and its colour ranges across the entire spectrum of browns, from almost yellow to almost black; their courage and intelligence vary in degree. It happens that a particular individual may have a darker coat than that of a Doberman, whose characteristic colour is black, or may be less intelligent than a Great Dane, which belongs to a breed less favoured in this respect. If, as is often done when it comes to humans, one were to define the breed of German Shepherds by just one of its characteristics, the results would be so absurd as to be glaringly obvious. But no one thinks of doing so because, when it comes to dogs, everyone knows full well that the zoological breed is a group of individuals who share, to a certain quantitative and qualitative extent, a number of physical, physiological and psychological characteristics that are passed on through heredity. The representative individual of a breed is simply the one who embodies all these characteristics to their fullest extent.

Now then: the same applies when it is said that the Nordic man is tall, fair-haired, dolichocephalic, hardy, brave, and so on: this merely describes a ‘showpiece’; and many Nordics are of average height, dark-haired, brachycephalic, weak or cowardly. This does not in any way mean that the Nordic race is a fiction. At most, one might argue that it is not a pure race. But does this expression make sense?

92. The fallacy of the ‘pure race’.

Up to now, we have regarded the racial group as a static collection of individuals. To answer the previous question, it is worth examining it from an evolutionary perspective. When do we say that a German Shepherd is of pure breed? Not when it achieves the theoretical perfection of the type, but when it is born of parents who are not

crossbreeds. By tracing back generation by generation in this way, we arrive at the origin of the breed—that is, the moment when, through mutation or by some other means, a litter of German Shepherds was born to parents of whom at least one was not a German Shepherd. We could thus trace back, from breed to species and from species to genus, to the supposed tiny mass of proteins that one day came to life. All of this would make no sense whatsoever. If we consider the common origin, the breed encompasses the entire animal kingdom. If we arbitrarily fix its beginning at the moment of its latest differentiation, it is founded on an original heterogeneity, even if we assume that no cross-breeding has taken place since then—a claim that can hardly be upheld when it comes to the animal breeds that have been best and most closely monitored since ancient times.

This does not in any way imply that genealogical data is of no interest, since common characteristics and the frequency of their occurrence stem from a process of inheritance; rather, it is erroneous to make purity a criterion for the existence of a race, and even more so for its value. As regards human groups, if one were to accept their descent from a single original couple, one would have to regard them as belonging to a single race, which is contrary to the facts. And if one were to consider a multiplicity of original mutations, one would still have to disregard the factor of interbreeding. In reality, what is called the degree of purity of a race is simply its relative homogeneity, that is to say, the fact that each of its members possesses, to a greater or lesser extent, the distinctive characteristics of the group in question.

It is not our task in these pages [2] to analyse the mechanism of biopsychic inheritance. Let us merely note that, in a small, closed community, everyone eventually becomes related to everyone else after a certain number of generations, and that every member of the group has the same ancestors as any other. The smaller a community is in number at its inception and the more closed it is in the course of its development, and the older it is, the more its members share common traits and the more they resemble one another.

A group that was originally heterogeneous is thus unified through inbreeding. Its members will certainly not all be identical, but they will, to a certain extent, become increasingly less dissimilar: their appearance, their mindset and their reactions will display a growing degree of homogeneity. The ‘purity’ of a race is, therefore, a product of inbreeding and the passage of time. If it is lost through interbreeding, it is possible to recover it. But the process is extremely lengthy, especially in a large human group. And, until it has regained its lost homogeneity, the community, thus affected in its very essence, is torn between diverse and often contradictory aspirations. It becomes scattered and lax.

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2)- See Mahieu, Jaime María de, *Fundamentos de biopolítica*, Centro Editor Argentino, Buenos Aires, 1968.

It is a historically proven fact that every mixed-race ethnic group temporarily loses, along with its hereditary unity, its harmony and its cohesion.

93. The classification of races.

Our previous analyses show how futile it is to attempt to classify races on the basis of hypotheses regarding specific origins which the current state of anthropology allows us neither to confirm nor to refute. Since race is a creation of history – through endogamy but also through selective pressure from the environment and the acquisition of heritable traits [3] – we are less concerned with knowing whether one or several ethnic groups existed at the dawn of humanity than with empirically defining the current boundaries of racial communities. Since it is not possible, within our scope of observation and action, to verify or bring about the transition of an individual or a group from one major race to another, it makes no difference to us whether these major races have existed since the beginning or are the product of a prehistoric differentiation to which we cannot return.

But to speak of major races is to establish a classification among ethnic groups; that is to say, to acknowledge the existence of broad racial communities, each of which possesses a multiplicity of physical, biological and psychological characteristics that are also evident, to some extent, within the most distinct sub-groups. It is now unanimously accepted that there are three major races, which, for lack of more precise terminology, we call white, yellow and black; these are unsatisfactory designations, since colour is only one of the recognised distinguishing characteristics—perhaps the most visible—and the choice of this criterion may hinder the ethnologist in his attempt to classify certain mixed-race or marginal groups.

The major races are, as a rule, clearly defined, as are the sub-races into which they are divided, whether these are the result of differentiation within a given environment or of interbreeding—a distinction that cannot always be established with certainty. One need not be a specialist to distinguish one hundred Japanese from one hundred Mongols, or one hundred northern Chinese from one hundred Guaraní, and to define the corresponding races as distinct groups within the great yellow race. Similarly, one can distinguish without great difficulty, within the great white race, the Semitic race, or, within the great black race, the Pygmy race. However, the demarcation becomes more imprecise and leaves unclassified or debatable 'residues'. For example: do white Europeans constitute one or several races? The answers are contradictory for two reasons: firstly, the erroneous methods of classification based on unstable characteristics, such as height or skull shape; secondly, the historicist obstinacy of those who wish at all costs to rely on the origin of the races in question, forgetting that ethnic groups are the product of a dual process of differentiation and fusion, with a predominance, depending on the epoch—

[3])- See Mahieu, op. cit.

... of one or other of these evolutionary trends. European whites must once have constituted several quite distinct races. But their state of intermingling is such today that they almost constitute a single race, within which one can distinguish the emerging races corresponding to geographical and political communities. Historically, it is undoubtedly erroneous to describe all Europeans as Aryans, but ethnically it is accurate on the whole, whether or not the chosen designation is apt, and even though we cannot always specify to what extent, beneath the current distinctions, remnants of races that existed prior to their relative fusion remain. This constant and diverse movement is often overlooked when attempting to map out the races. Whilst it is easy to demarcate, despite the countless instances of interbreeding, the territory of the major races, as well as that of groups clearly distinguished by hybridisation between major races – the Malays, for example – the task becomes delicate when it comes to the races themselves, because some of them are in a state of constant flux. In Europe, the old boundaries of the Nordic, Alpine and Mediterranean races have not yet lost all meaning, but they tend to be superseded by the new national races, which are, moreover, less distinct due to the growing interrelation of communities and the standardisation of living conditions. In other words, whilst a race, when its distinctive characteristics are dominant and relatively stable, is as stable as a major race and is not fundamentally altered except through interbreeding, it is fundamentally unstable when its characteristics are sensitive to environmental pressure or subject to mutation. Therefore, there are essentially distinct breeds whose acquired distinctive characteristics can no longer be altered except through crossbreeding, and accidentally differentiated breeds whose acquired distinctive characteristics are still susceptible to modification by the environment.

94. The crucible.

This last observation is of the utmost importance, as it enables us to establish what might be called the degree of kinship between races—that is to say, the relative ease with which they might eventually merge into a homogeneous whole—as well as to clarify the concept of miscegenation. If, in fact, two individuals or two groups belonging to accidentally differentiated races unite, their offspring will possess the characteristics common to both races, whilst the accidental distinguishing characteristics will be attenuated and, over time, erased by the environment. Such is the case, particularly clear, of the royal houses of Europe: Tsar Nicholas II and King Alfonso XIII, for example, had in their veins the blood of all the ancient races of the Old Continent; they manifested, however, the ethnic characteristics of the Russians and the Spaniards, respectively, that is to say, of new races in the making.

On the contrary, the union of fundamentally distinct races produces hybrids, just as is the case with major races. In other words, the new group will only emerge from them through inbreeding-induced homogenisation. We now have an explanation for the so-called ‘melting pot’ phenomenon, as it occurs in the United States, where

elements from all European races have, in a very short time and despite almost continuous immigration, achieved a relative homogeneity that makes their population a new ethnic group whose distinctive characteristics are clearly discernible. Conversely, the Jews, who have lived in Europe for over two millennia, have retained—by virtue of belonging to a race that is essentially distinct within the larger white race—peculiar characteristics that distinguish them from the Aryan populations.

It follows from all this that social communities can be classified, from an ethnic point of view, into two categories: those that are racially homogeneous, whether they derive from a single stock, from a 'mixture' of races that are incidentally distinct, or from complete intermingling, and those that are racially heterogeneous because the unification of constituent elements belonging to essentially distinct races is not yet complete. It also follows that the ethnic unity of a country of immigration depends on the degree of kinship between the races comprising its population and the time elapsed since they first came into contact.

95. The inequality of races.

The degree of homogeneity is not the only factor in classifying ethnic communities. One must also consider the relative value of the races present. It is an observable fact that races are unequal, just as individuals are. Whatever the reason – whether due to an original deficiency or a subsequent misguided evolution – it is evident that certain ethnic groups are today incapable of creating a civilisation or even of assimilating the one imposed upon them. Will they be able to do so in the future? We do not know, and even in that case their current inferiority would remain: a child is not the equal of an adult, and even less so when the child is developmentally delayed. Let us note, moreover, that certain races, termed primitive, are in reality degenerate, without the level of their most brilliant era ever having risen very high.

Why dwell on it? No one disputes the facts: the great black race has produced neither science, nor literature, nor philosophy, nor theology; its art cannot be compared with that of Europe, Asia and America; its political organisation remains rudimentary. Nor does anyone dispute the fact that white people, wherever they have appeared, have been a powerful force for order and progress. The few advocates of racial equality exploit individual cases that mean absolutely nothing. Even if a certain African tribal chief displays greater intelligence than an ordinary European peasant and greater moral courage than a Chinese criminal, and let the African-American Carver have been a great chemist and even a benefactor of humanity, all this simply implies that ethnic groups do not overlap globally on the scale of values and that the best of the blacks does not come after the worst of the Asians or the whites. But when we consider a race, it is the community it represents that gives us

society, with its elite and its fools, as an organic whole rather than as a mere collection of individuals.

Let us not assume, however, that comparing ethnic groups is always straightforward, nor that the outcome is always indisputable. The concept of superiority is essentially relative to the scale of values that is accepted or created. If it is decreed that resistance to heat is a more important criterion than intelligence, one must admit the superiority of the great black race over the others, and especially over the white race. Here we are verging on a paradox. The difficulty, though real, only arises in extreme cases. When, on the contrary, one looks throughout history at the great white and yellow races—and above all the former—dominating wherever they go, creating empires, cultures and technologies, it is not easy to deny their overall supremacy, even if their superiority may be disputed on this or that particular point. Moreover, a divergence of judgement regarding the relative worth of this or that ethnic group would in no way contradict the fact of racial inequality, which is the only issue of interest to us here.

96. Race and Community.

In the preceding sections we have considered ethnic groups in themselves. Observation and historical analysis show us, however, that race and community are confused only in very exceptional cases. Generally speaking, a race encompasses several communities, and often a community contains diverse racial elements within it. It is therefore appropriate now to examine the ethnic factor in relation to the organic structures of society.

If a community is racially homogeneous or, at the very least, comprises ethnic groups that are incidentally distinct but in the process of unification – as is the case, with the exception of Jewish minorities, in the nations of Western Europe – its value depends, beyond any doubt, on the shared genetic heritage. We do not mean by this that geophysical, geopolitical, institutional, economic, religious, cultural, linguistic and other factors constitute mere determined structures or illusory superstructures, and that race alone provides the Community with the conditions of its existence; rather, we simply mean that the efficacy and even the very existence of these factors are subordinate to the ethnic possibilities of the whole. As we have already stated (see Paragraph 38), race is, therefore, the substrate of communal life: a kind of raw material that is malleable only within certain limits.

The situation changes fundamentally when elements belonging to different major races or to several fundamentally distinct races coexist within the same structural framework. The value of a polyethnic community clearly depends on its racial composition. But it can no longer be said to stem from its genetic makeup, since it is not one but several different and often unequal genetic endowments that are at play, acting not only through their presence but also through their interactions. Thus, the black population in the United States is declining, due to

the problems their presence gives rise to, and the value of the community of which they form part, whereas the Black people of Angola provide that Portuguese province with a workforce without which it could not even survive. Why such a difference? Simply because, in the first case, the institutions do not correspond to reality. US federal laws take no account of the existence, let alone the inequality, of the two associated ethnic groups: they are drafted for white people and applied as they stand to black people, which is an absurdity that creates all the difficulties we are familiar with.

The coexistence of unequal races within the same community is not, in itself, and certainly not by any means, a factor of inferiority. Indeed, an ethnically homogeneous community possesses, in addition to its intrinsic value, a particular effectiveness both in action and in resistance. But it is merely the effectiveness of what it is, and it would be detrimental to acquire it through miscegenation at the expense of the dominant race's identity. A hierarchical polyethnic community, in fact, possesses the value of its superior component augmented by the potential of the inferior one, whereas fusion would establish unity at an intermediate level between the two original races. Furthermore, a detrimental state of heterogeneity would be created over several generations. The ethnopolitical problem of interracial relations only arises from the moment when one or more constituent elements escape the demands of the social order and tend to secure a position that does not correspond to their intrinsic value or their organic role; that is to say, when they refuse to perform their proper function within the Community.

97. Racial specialisation.

The thesis of racial equality clashes, in practice, with the very reality of social order. The rights possessed by human beings, inherent in their nature or individual characteristics, only acquire social validity when they correspond to functional obligations. But functions, within a community, however undeveloped it may be, are unequal in importance and demand unequal abilities from those who perform them. It is therefore logical and possible to conceive of a multi-ethnic community in which certain functions were organically reserved for a particular racial group that demonstrated specific aptitudes for them. The inferior race, or simply the unassimilable one, would thus find its place in society and enjoy the corresponding rights, and only these.

There is no shortage of historical examples of such an organisation. The best known is undoubtedly that of the United States prior to the Civil War. Black people performed specific subordinate roles. In return, they had the right to be fed, housed and clothed, even in old age, and to be cared for in the event of illness and protected at all times. Useful to the community of which they formed a part, no one thought of excluding them from it or of hating them. When the North's victory had abolished this racial specialisation and shattered this multi-ethnic functional order, Black people did not, of course, acquire the capacities which

Their race had relegated them to the lowest rung of the social ladder. With a few individual exceptions, they remained labourers and servants, and still are today, a hundred years on. They thus retained the roles for which they were predisposed. But they lost the corresponding rights: black workers have no social security, no pensions, and no job security. They were, admittedly, granted the same civil and political rights as white people, whom they were then believed to be equal to. Through their demands, they became a threat to a society in which they were no longer seen as necessary: hence the often brutal reactions, the effects of which they suffered and continue to suffer. Just like a living tissue – a mass of cells – that loses its organic function, Black people in the United States have become a veritable social cancer.

For centuries, slavery had resolved the problem of interracial relations—or, more accurately, had prevented the issue from arising in the first place. Through either actual or perceived coercion, Black people were incorporated into white families, becoming an integral part of them in a subordinate position. Slavery society was not, therefore, made up of two juxtaposed racial groups, but of a multitude of bi-ethnic family units. Admittedly, the system was far from perfect, and numerous reforms were needed. But there can be no doubt that relations between whites and blacks were maintained within a functional organic order, in accordance with the relative status of the ethnic groups in contact, though not always of the individuals comprising them. The slave was integrated into society; he was not treated as an outcast or an enemy; he generally enjoyed, given the standard of living of the time, a higher status than that of today's proletarian. The master was protected not only against the consequences of a potential race conflict but also, and above all, against the possible neglect of his ethnic superiority. The slave system, in effect, complemented the de facto inequality of the races with a de jure inequality. A white man might commit a transgression with a black woman: the little mulatto, whatever the colour of his skin, did not cross the ethnic-social barrier. Interracial mixing therefore improved the inferior race without ever contaminating the superior one.

However, whether or not one approves of it from a historical perspective, slavery belongs to the past and it is not possible to return to it, if only for the simple reason that the semi-patriarchal family structure it presupposes no longer exists almost anywhere. At the very least, we can learn a lesson from experience: a multi-ethnic community is only satisfactory when the subordinate group is organically integrated into the dominant group, without being able to threaten the latter's racial integrity.

98. Segregation.

In the absence of a genuine solution that addresses the 'biosociological law' we have just outlined, the only recourse is to resort to palliative measures of defence. Segregation is, in fact, a palliative measure, which we see being applied with varying degrees of success by

contemporary multi-ethnic communities that refuse to accept the idea of their decline through intermingling. The aim is to separate the races living within the same territory and, to some extent, prevent their contact because they do not know how or are unable to organise it; in other words, to mitigate an evil that society recognises it is powerless to eliminate.

Whether customary or statutory, lax or strict, segregation always proves inadequate. Firstly, because it is insincere: white people wish to keep Black people away from their families, their neighbourhoods and their train carriages, but not from their factories, because they provide a source of cheap labour for certain jobs. Or else they are used as cannon fodder. Sometimes liberal hypocrisy leads to the legal affirmation of an equality of rights that is denied in practice. But even if segregation were absolute, the 'inferior' or 'unassimilable' race granted a specific status, interracial marriage prohibited and interracial coupling punished as a crime, all that would still not constitute a satisfactory solution. For separation creates racial blocs which, owing to differences in living conditions or the mere will to power, become antagonistic. The black slave was not, nor did he feel, in solidarity with the race as a whole, but with the family of which he was a part and whose fate he shared in law and in fact. The black proletarian, on the contrary, is and feels united with his racial brethren by a common condition and a shared isolation. A mistreated black slave cursed his evil master; a humiliated black proletarian proclaims the struggle of the races.

There are but two valid solutions: geographical *apartheid*, or the integration of ethnically inferior elements into an organic society, giving them the opportunity to develop their potential to the fullest extent; an opportunity they do not have in an egalitarian society, which highlights their inferiority rather than compensating for it through a hierarchical social order.

99. The Dialectic of Races.

There is, therefore, within every multi-ethnic community, a dual dialectical movement. On the one hand, except in the case of a perfectly established organic society, the subordinate or unassimilable racial community kept under guardianship protests against its status, opposes the dominant community and fights for its liberation, if not for supremacy. On the other hand, however, the two communities tend to merge through intermarriage. This latter process has two causes: sexual attraction and the desire of the inferiors to draw closer to their masters. The first phenomenon is well known and accounts for the majority of mixed-race individuals. The second requires some explanation.

It has been observed in the United States that people of mixed race tended to marry one another, whilst Black people preferred to marry women of mixed race who were as light-skinned as possible. Within the Black community, therefore, a process of selection is at work that favours the reproduction of people of mixed race who are increasingly closer to the white type. This leads to the increasingly frequent birth of 'white Blacks', that is to say,

mixed-race individuals who appear to be white. Hence the phenomenon of *'passing'*, whereby such mixed-race individuals, by changing their place of residence, manage to pass themselves off as white, marry into the white population and thus introduce melanin genes into it. *Passing* is evidently only possible due to the absence of legal ethnic discrimination. But it exists, and the United States is on the path to 'blackification'. Complete mixing would produce a new race that might display qualities of imagination not possessed by the current white population. But the energy and creative power that characterise the Aryan peoples would inevitably disappear. Let us note, on the other hand, that this process of miscegenation is very slow, particularly in the United States, where racial consciousness is highly developed, but that the higher birth rate among Blacks, compared to that of Whites, is constantly increasing the proportion of Africans in American society. One can foresee the day when not only will a significant proportion of whites, or those so-called, have melanin in their veins, but, even more so, when mulattos will outnumber the white population, as is already the case in Brazil.

The high fertility of inferior races and the relative infertility of superior ones are facts of interest not only to multi-ethnic communities but to the whole world. White nations are losing ground. Not only have they had to relinquish most of their colonial territories, but an accelerated migratory influx of people of colour is already taking place in Europe. Whites have roused the yellow races from their millennial slumber, have prevented the blacks from killing and devouring one another, and have compelled them to produce ever more food. By bringing hygiene and medicine to the inferior peoples, they have multiplied their adversaries of today and tomorrow. The ethnic balance of the planet has been shattered

X. QUALITATIVE STRATIFICATION

100. Individual inequality.

Race, the nature and social impact of which we examined in the previous chapter, is but one of the factors – the most powerful – underlying the differentiation and inequality that historical observation and analysis allow us to observe amongst human beings. Let us consider, in fact, a racially homogeneous community, or one in a sufficiently advanced stage of homogenisation that it is not necessary to take into account multiple ethnic groups within it. If we examine it from a structural point of view, it will appear to us (see Chapters II to VI) as a conglomerate of social groups and associations, intertwined and organised hierarchically, which perform diverse functions, and we will be able to outline its organic structure. This will not, however, give us a complete picture of the society in question. For groups and associations are ultimately made up of individuals who constitute their 'raw material'. And these individuals are different and unequal—

both because of the virtual biopsychic traits they receive from their parents at the moment of conception and because of historical developments, which compel each individual to realise only a part of their potential.

Even the most egalitarian theorists do not dare to deny the qualitative differences that everyday life reveals among human beings: they merely set them aside and construct beautiful utopias based on an abstract 'Man' who does not exist and never has. In reality, we encounter strong, intelligent, artistic and courageous individuals, as well as weak, stupid, philistine and cowardly ones. Men and women are born, and each sex not only possesses physiological and mental peculiarities but also imposes its own colouring on the whole range of individual characters. Age, in turn, intervenes to create an indisputable qualitative hierarchy amongst men.

If we arrange the data from our observations in order from the general to the specific, we shall place age first, a factor that affects all individuals and determines the extent to which each person fulfils their potential. Next comes sex, which divides individuals of any age into two categories. And finally, individual characteristics—whether actual or potential—on the basis of which levels of aptitude are defined (see Paragraph 103). The inequality arising from age and that stemming from different biopsychic endowments and their development do not give rise to major problems of acceptance. Gender inequality, on the other hand, is frequently called into question. Or, rather, the evident inferiority of women is often attributed to negative social pressure. Let us simply note that women's lack of ability in the field of creativity (and we shall see in the following section the importance of this aspect) is evident even in activities traditionally reserved, by function or by training, for women: cooking, sewing and music, in particular. There are, of course, women who are more intelligent, more artistic and even braver than most men, just as there are children who are superior, from these points of view, to most adults. But all the great chefs, the great dressmakers and, even more tellingly, the great composers have always been men.

101. The levels of inequality.

We have already had occasion to mention, when discussing races, how relative the notions of superiority and inferiority are. They depend, in fact, on the value we consider most important and on the basis of which we formulate our judgements. And it is obvious that the determination of this value does not stem solely or fundamentally from a more or less arbitrary preference, but also and above all from the conditions imposed by history. Hence the *levels of inequality* based on Ammon's classification [4] – biological, economic, moral

4) – Reference to Otto Ammon (1842–1916), founder of social anthropology in Germany. His principal work, **Die natürliche Auslese beim* Menschen* (Natural Selection in

intellectual – are arranged in a variable manner according to circumstances, that is, according to the level of development attained and the framework of affirmation.

From a biological perspective, the key factors are physical strength, stamina, work capacity, potential longevity and health. These factors are the most important – if only because they determine all the others – for Neolithic tribes, whose survival depends on hunting and physical combat with their neighbours.

The values situated on the economic plane are those relating to the production and marketing of goods: technical skill, organisational ability, the art of selling, and the spirit of profit. Entirely useless in the wilderness, they prevail, whether we like it or not, in the commercialised society of our time.

The qualities found on the moral plane – heroism, self-control, steadfastness, perseverance, a spirit of solidarity, etc. – prevail in any society with a military infrastructure and, generally speaking, in times of war. They lose much of their importance when peace becomes the permanent state of affairs and, above all, when commercial activities take precedence over all others.

Finally, there remain the intellectual values – understanding, judgement, invention, memory, etc. – to which it would be worth adding, however different their nature may be, the spiritual values that Ammon does not take into account: aesthetic sensibility and mystical exaltation. Barely perceptible in the wild, the degree of inequality associated with them grows in importance in parallel with the level of civilisation.

Let us make it clear, so that there are no misunderstandings, that these four sets of values, far from being mutually exclusive, complement one another and are mutually dependent, even in extreme cases. Without courage, the most athletic of Neolithic tribesmen will serve as food for his enemies; without a modicum of intelligence, he will fall victim to the first wild beast that encounters him. Without technical skill, today's civilised man, however intelligent or artistic he may be, will starve to death. The only thing that varies is the point at which inequality becomes most evident and has the most serious consequences.

Does all this mean, then, that our criteria for judgement in this regard are fundamentally relative? They would be if we confined ourselves to Ammon's models. But there is a basic value, immanent – where it exists – to all the others, which the aforementioned sociologist set aside: creative capacity. We find it present in the mountaineer who scales an unclimbed peak, in the industrialist who builds a factory, in the warlord who wins a battle, in the philosopher who...

Man deals with the influence of the racial factor in the formation of the upper classes of society. (Editor's note)

A new conception of the world emerges in the artist who composes a symphony or sculpts a statue. It may be that, from a purely individual point of view, the contemplative person, withdrawn into himself, finds full fulfilment, though we doubt it. But man is a social being by nature, and his value in the Community and for the Community is measured not by his inner enjoyment but by his contribution to the factors of historical evolution, that is to say, by his creation. We shall see later (Paragraph 103) that it is on this basis that a unique and general qualitative stratification of human beings can be established.

102. The biotypes.

Creative capacity is always a combination of two elements. The first belongs to the realm of inequality in which individual expression manifests itself. It is, therefore, a variable factor. The second, by contrast, is the same in all cases: the dynamism of an assertive drive to conquer, a generalised form of aggression. All creators seek to assert themselves over the external world and, in particular, directly or indirectly, over their social environment. We know that this drive for conquest has its principal and almost exclusive origin in internal testicular secretions, which explains why women – and eunuchs – are incapable of creation.

This last fact would suffice to demonstrate to us, if necessary, that aggression is a phenomenon of a biopsychic nature. It will come as no surprise to us, under these circumstances, that human biotypes can be classified according to this criterion, that is to say, that creative capacity is linked to a specific somatic constitution.

This is not the place to undertake an analysis of human types. Let us simply note that specialists identify three main biotypes: longilineal, mediolineal and brevilineal. The first is characterised by a predominance of length. It corresponds to slender, dolichocephalic, resilient, nervous and quick individuals. The third, by contrast, is characterised by a predominance of width. It corresponds to stocky, brachycephalic, muscular, apathetic and slow individuals. The second simply marks an intermediate position. Needless to say, these biotypes—which are further divided into numerous varieties—are not absolute categories, and the individuals we classify will occupy, without interruption, all possible degrees and combinations between the 'perfect' longilineal and the 'perfect' brevilineal.

Now, anthropological and sociological observation, together with historical analysis, show us that creators—in the broad sense in which we have used the term—belong to, or are close to, the longilineal type, whereas we do not find them among individuals of the brevilineal type. The intellectual, moral, economic and biological values corresponding to our levels of inequality (see Paragraph 101) reach a high degree of development in some short-limbed individuals, whilst certain long-limbed individuals are at a very low level in this respect. But it is only in long-limbed individuals that we find the creative power capable of projecting these values into

form of creative work. To put it another way, not all longilines are creators, but all creators are longilines, or at least are closer to the longiline biotype than to the breviline biotype. It is therefore neither by chance nor due to mysterious historical circumstances that, in Europe, the regions in which the Alpine sub-race – typically brevilineal – predominates have produced a considerably lower percentage of creators than the areas predominantly populated by the Nordic and Mediterranean sub-races. Switzerland, a highly developed country but with an almost entirely Alpine population, has not, in its entire history, produced a single leading figure in any field.

103. The strata of aptitude.

On the basis of the data set out in the preceding paragraphs, we can now classify, from a qualitative perspective, the individuals who make up a given social group. For the time being, we shall limit this to adult males. We shall see later (Paragraph 107) how women and children fit into this framework.

Let it, then, be a community of a high level of civilisation. Within it we find individuals who not only excel in their respective fields but who have contributed, are contributing, or are capable of contributing—should circumstances permit or demand it—new elements of social affirmation that would not otherwise come into being. Saints and heroes, perhaps; more likely statesmen, strategists, philosophers, scientists, writers, artists, captains of industry, etc., who will be remembered by posterity for having enriched the cultural heritage of the Community with their works, and some others whose creative capacity is destined to remain in a potential state for one reason or another external to their personality. Among these *creators,* [5] suited to leadership, invention and conquest, who constitute the highest qualitative stratum of the group under consideration, perhaps future observation will allow us to recognise the presence of geniuses, of some of those individuals who, in one aspect or another, alter the course of history.

Below the creators come *the implementers,* who take, develop and refine the ideas and inventions of the former. Less brilliant but more practical than their natural leaders—and sometimes more intelligent than them—they are irremediably lacking in the capacity to innovate. They need instructions, but when they receive them, they know how to carry them through to their logical conclusion, even showing a spirit of initiative.

Next come *the assimilators,* incapable of either initiative or innovation. Whether slightly, moderately or highly intelligent, they confine themselves to accepting the ideas of the

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5) – With a few modifications, we follow Vacher de Lapouge in this section: **L'Aryen, son rôle* social* (*The Aryan and his social role*), published by Albert Fontemoing, Paris, 1899. See also: Ammon, Otto, **L'ordre social et ses bases* naturelles* (Social order *and its natural foundations*), published by Albert Fontemoing, Paris, 1900.

At present, they display the utmost conformism. When they are intelligent, they readily absorb the instruction given to them, without reservation or doubt of any kind. Hence, they excel in examinations and competitive examinations. When their capacity for understanding is low, they fall into indifference and behave as mere recipients of advertising messages. For the leader and the agitator, they constitute an ideal mass to be manipulated.

Finally, there remain the plain and simple *brutes*, who are incapable of grasping even the simplest ideas. They constitute a human—or, rather, subhuman—relic from which nothing useful can be gleaned, either for their own sake or for the Community.

It is worth noting that the creators all belong to the longilineal biotype and the implementers to the longilineal and mediolineal biotypes, with the exception of a few brevilineals of far superior ability, whilst the assimilators and the brutes are, for the most part, brevilineals. These are extremely important data for applied sociology.

104. Strata of aptitude and level of civilisation.

Unfortunately, we do not have statistics relating to the qualitative stratification of any community, although it would be relatively easy to establish them through sampling. We have no choice, therefore, but to rely on mere estimates in this regard. These are sufficient, however, to make the necessary comparisons.

In a society of the highest calibre – Germany or France, for example – at the height of its glory, we find a handful of geniuses who lead a very small minority of creators, likely numbering no more than one in every hundred thousand inhabitants. It cannot be ruled out that other individuals in the same category remain unknown and 'unemployed' due to the shortcomings of social organisation. Those who achieve anything are far more numerous: perhaps, at best, they account for around five per cent of the population. The rest are distributed unevenly and variably between assimilators – the most numerous – and the unskilled.

At a slightly lower level of civilisation – that of the Jewish people, for example – there are no further creators, save as an almost accidental exception, but the implementers maintain and may even increase their proportion. Conversely, this proportion decreases in communities fundamentally characterised by mediocrity – Switzerland or the Scandinavian countries of today, for example – to the benefit of the assimilators. In both cases, the brutes may become fewer in number than in social groups of superior capacity. For the level of civilisation depends fundamentally, regardless of often deceptive appearances, on *the* proportion of *creators and achievers.* Because they have creators,

From this point of view, Russia is far ahead of Sweden, even though the proportion of uneducated people in its population is considerably higher.

If we move from civilised nations to primitive or degenerate peoples, we find, at the highest qualitative level, only a handful of *assimilators* who, having normally nothing to assimilate, confine themselves to maintaining, in all fields, the customary order, unless contact with a people of a higher level turns them into 'evolved' individuals through imitation. The rest of the population is quite simply made up of brutes.

It must be clearly understood that the various qualitative strata do not constitute watertight compartments, nor are they homogeneous categories. Between the supreme genius at the upper tip of the corresponding 'tulip bulb' [6], representing a Community of a very high level, and the ultimate brute at the lower tip of the bulb, representing a degenerate people of Palaeolithic level, there are an infinite number of descending degrees, which we group into well-defined layers solely for the sake of analytical convenience.

105. Strata of aptitude and race in the polyethnic Community.

From a qualitative perspective, a multi-ethnic community can be regarded as a single entity or, conversely, as the juxtaposition of two or more racial groups, each with its own internal stratification. The first approach is the only one that can be validly applied in the case of a colonial-type society, where a tiny minority of a superior race and stratum artificially superimposes itself upon a large collective with lesser biopsychological potential. To the tulip bulb representing the latter—assimilators and brutes, with perhaps a few achievers—is then added the sharp tip of the achievers of the superior race and even the creators who, from the metropolis, impose their decisions. Over time, the primitive part of the bulb changes shape: the assimilators absorb part of the colonisers' cultural heritage and the standard of living improves through imitation, whilst the inevitable intermingling in turn increases the upper stratum of the subordinate population.

Apart from the occasional, insignificant overlap between those who create and those who assimilate, racial stratification and qualitative stratification coincide.

The analysis becomes more difficult when examining multi-ethnic communities composed of two or more large racial groups in respect of which the aforementioned coincidence does not exist. Qualitatively, the white population of the United States is quite similar to that of Switzerland or that of the

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[6])- Otto Ammon illustrates the qualitative variations in question using 'tulip bulbs' divided horizontally in proportion to the demographic size of the various strata.

Scandinavian countries, with the addition, in economic terms, of a few creators. There is nothing to prevent us – and American sociologists often do this – from considering it in isolation. We will thus arrive at a classic 'tulip bulb' model for societies at a medium level of civilisation. On the other hand, we can graphically represent the black population, with a result similar to that which a qualitative analysis of the inhabitants of Haiti would provide: a few mixed-race creators, a minority stratum of assimilated mixed-race and black people with a numerical predominance of the former, and a majority stratum of uneducated people. Such a procedure is valid to the extent that segregation maintains distinct social structures and activities for the two racial communities, that is to say, more so in the south than in the north, and increasingly less so in both regions.

In reality, American society is moving towards unification, and we can now legitimately, from the perspective that concerns us, consider it as a whole and define its strata of aptitude without taking its ethnic duality into account. We shall thus have, at the top of our pyramid, the tiny white minority of economic creators; in the second stratum, white achievers with a mixed-race minority; in the third, assimilated whites, mixed-race people and Blacks; in the fourth, unskilled whites, mixed-race people and Blacks, with a higher relative proportion of the latter. We proceed, then, as we did for the colonial community. But the result obtained is entirely different. Here the upper group does not add to the lower to increase its potential: the two are averaged, and the percentage of creators and achievers must be calculated against the total population. The coloured group thus constitutes a burden that lowers the community's level of civilisation.

106. Biopsychological social specialisation.

In the preceding sections, we have confined ourselves to establishing the fact of individual inequality and its demographic consequences. It is obvious, however, that the qualitative characteristics of society's individual 'raw material' affect not only life but also the structures of human communities. Even though egalitarian theories may call it into question, the principle of biopsychic social specialisation is universally valid.

No community is unaware of the age differences among its members. Everywhere, adolescence is set aside for study, adulthood for work, and old age for rest. To reverse this natural order would result in an inconceivable absurdity. Age is one of the essential factors in bio-psychological differentiation: a child has neither the same physical capabilities nor the same psychological dispositions as an adult, nor does an adult have the same as an elderly person. More generally, the division of labour in any organised society is based, to some extent, on the particular capacities of individuals: teachers are not chosen for their muscles, nor dockers for their aesthetic sense. Therefore, the functional order necessarily takes individual dispositions into account—or, rather, relies on them—and no one questions this.

What is often denied, however, is the functional inequality between the sexes, which is at least as evident as that between age groups. The function of reproduction is so essential to society that, without it, society would cease to exist within a few decades. Now then: the biological roles of men and women are different, and so are their social consequences. It is the mother who carries the child in her womb and who breastfeeds it. Consequently, she is not available for regular productive work, and it is logical that the home should be left in her care. On the other hand, their physical build and the psychological qualities associated with it are no more identical in women and men than in cows and bulls, if we may be permitted this somewhat jarring comparison. No one would think of bullfighting with cows in the arena. Women are not made for combat, nor for command, nor – as we have already seen (Paragraph 100) – for creation.

From a demographic perspective, it is therefore natural that each social role should be assigned to the individual best suited, by virtue of their own characteristics, to perform it. But we shall see that the functional differentiation of the individual is, in turn, a social phenomenon.

107. Family and lineage.

Genetics teaches us that, at the moment of conception, a human being receives their entire genetic makeup from their parents. Therefore, they are an heir not only because of what they acquire after birth, but also and above all because of who they are. Education, whether systematic or not, guides the child between their good and bad potentials, but these cannot be changed, though they can be reinforced or mitigated. It therefore depends on the parents' personality whether the child is potentially suited to performing this or that role. And parents, of course, can only pass on characteristics that are present in their respective hereditary endowments, as these have been shaped and modified by each individual's personal history.

Hence, the choice of parents has a crucial impact on the 'creation' of the family and, consequently, on the social order. Recent history provides us with many examples of regulated family specialisation. In the Ancien Régime, nobility was passed down through the paternal line: this overlooked the fact that the mother contributes as many genes to the child as the father. But custom generally supplemented the law, and *misalliances* were exceptional. Some military orders were stricter in this regard and required their members to have at least four generations of nobility. Even today, tradition perpetuates these selective standards in certain circles.

Finally, let us note that ancient history records the behaviour of certain families who, isolated for ethnic or simply biopsychological reasons within a lower-class population, preserved their distinctive qualities through strict endogamy: such were the imperial families of Peru and, as regards the last dynasty, of Egypt.

The family can, therefore, perpetuate itself through unions that are wholly or partially consanguineous, thereby forming a lineage that preserves a set of specific bio-psychological traits. This phenomenon is not confined to any particular social class. There are working-class and peasant lineages just as there are aristocratic ones, and the concept of *mésalliance* applies to all levels of the social hierarchy. Even though it is, in fact, often the result of prejudice, in the full sense of the word, resistance to the introduction of different elements into the family has solid scientific foundations and responds to a real danger of the destruction of the lineage. To introduce unknown or simply foreign factors into it is to conduct an experiment from which there can be no turning back. It is impossible to foresee what the resulting biopsychic synthesis will be.

The endogamous preservation of the traditional hereditary mass ensures, on the contrary, barring cases of degeneration (see Paragraph 230), the unity over time of the family type, both physical and psychological. The existence of such a type cannot be denied in homogeneous lineages. Common parlance itself acknowledges this when it uses the expression 'family resemblance'. History records lineages of artisans, peasants, industrialists, artists, statesmen, w a r lords, etc., as well as of idiots and criminals. The lineage is, therefore, a differentiated hereditary biopsychic group. It is not essentially distinct from the race. Just as we saw (Section 93) races dividing into secondary groups, we now see these subdividing into lineages, within the same process of differentiation.

108. The endogamous social stratum.

We shall see in the following sections how lineages differ. But we must note from the outset that, except in exceptional cases of strict consanguinity, they are neither formed nor maintained in isolation. Unions between lineages of the same hierarchy and often of identical social function produce, over time, a homogenisation that unifies them into a broader whole. This is the origin of the social class of the Ancien Régime (except, of course, for the Catholic clergy, which was of a different nature), with its subdivisions. It is also, though to a lesser extent, the origin of the contemporary class (see Section 181).

From a biosociological perspective, the social stratum of an ethnically homogeneous community can be compared to the caste system of a mixed-race community, but with one fundamental difference: the caste is necessarily closed because it is founded on a particular synthesis of essentially distinct racial characteristics, which are not intended to be altered. The social stratum, on the other hand, may be open to change because the biopsychic characteristics peculiar to it are accidentally differentiated; this does not mean that they are the product of chance, but simply that they arose and may still arise through the action of the environment. Today's social classes have not fully retained the biopsychic nature of the estates, as other distorting factors intervene in their formation (see Note 193). Nevertheless, it remains true, as Alexis Carrel quite rightly observes, that the peasants who have remained

Those who have remained attached to their land despite the lure of factory work have done so because they possessed the qualities and shortcomings that made them better suited to that way of life. Similarly, the labourer who proves incapable of becoming a foreman clearly suffers from an organic and psychological deficiency.

Everyone in fact acknowledges, even if imperfectly, this bio-psychic nature of social strata and recognises the existence of psychosomatic types that express them. There is a peasant type, a proletarian type, a bourgeois type, an aristocratic type, etc., so different from one another that some believed they could be explained by racial origin.

109. The origin of social stratification.

Gobineau [7] believed that social stratification was the result of military conquest and the subjugation of the vanquished. Thus, in France, the nobility was said to descend from the Germanic invaders—tall, fair-haired and dolichocephalic—whilst the rest of the population was of Gallo-Roman origin, with a numerical predominance of the Alpine element—short, dark-skinned and brachycephalic. This explanation, based on the author's ethnic fixism and by analogy with the caste system, is historically inaccurate. It has, in fact, been demonstrated that the French feudal aristocracy was formed by the fusion of barbarian chieftains and Gallo-Roman patricians and, furthermore, that it grew and was renewed over the centuries through countless ennoblements.

This does not invalidate the fact of the supremacy of the long-limbed, dolichocephalic type, and Vacher de Lapouge [8] established this firmly on statistical grounds: average height and the proportion of tall individuals, as well as that of dolichocephalics, increase with social status. The reason for this phenomenon, according to the aforementioned sociologist, is simply the superiority of the Nordic type, which is preserved despite racial mixing and is concentrated among the ruling classes, from which the Alpine type is, to some extent, eliminated by natural selection.

Such an interpretation fails to take into account the variability of the characteristics on which Lapouge bases his argument. We now have good reason to believe that cephalic index is influenced by environmental factors. It seems well established that the children of dolichocephalic and brachycephalic immigrants tend, in New York—where the phenomenon has been scientifically studied—towards mesocephaly. We also know that height is not an immutable hereditary factor and that urban life, in general, leads to an increase in height. Finally, Vacher de Lapouge himself demonstrates that the depigmentation of hair and skin stems from a pathological atrophy caused by cold and foggy climates and that it is correctable, although hereditary—

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[7])- See Gobineau, Count Arthur de, *Essay on the Inequality of the Human Races*, Ed. Apolo, Barcelona, 1936.

[8])- Cf. Vacher de Lapouge, *L'Aryen, son rôle social*, Ed. Albert Fontemoing, Paris, 1899.

ria, due to changes in living conditions. It therefore seems clear that social stratification depends, in its qualitative aspect, on factors that are accidentally differentiated and is the product of the dual movement of previously constituted types, which unite through affinity and capacity, and of the functional environment that transforms, when necessary, the beings subjected to its pressure.

1.10. Inheritance and function.

Let us examine the first point. Consider a society in the making, such as that of the American 'Frontier' at the end of the last century. Only adventurous and enterprising men ventured West. Those who possessed the spirit of a leader, a suitable physique and sufficient intelligence naturally gathered around them strong and courageous individuals who were, however, incapable of leading a campaign against the Indians or establishing a ranch on the prairie. Others, intelligent but less daring and incapable of commanding, opened stores. Functional specialisation, in an environment where neither fortune nor convention played a part, was therefore based solely on the bio-psychic capacities of individuals, exactly as in the early Middle Ages in Europe.

This is clearly not the case in today's Western world, where powerful distorting factors have a negative impact. However, if we consider not individuals but social strata, we shall find that there is still, generally speaking, a correspondence between the role and the hereditary endowment of the person performing it. And this occurs simply because, in contemporary society as on the 'frontier'—albeit to a lesser degree—the role requires particular biopsychic characteristics. In the most egalitarian system, it is not possible to appoint a stoker as a ship's captain. Social stratification is therefore based on the biopsychic selection of types that meet the requirements of the various functions. From this point of view, it is accurate to say, with Vacher de Lapouge, that social strata 'attract' individuals of a certain type.

However, this view is incomplete. When industrial development led to a proliferation of factories, there was no hereditary proletarian class that could serve as a standard for recruitment. Industrialists sought their workers amongst the peasantry, a class shaped by centuries of an unchanging way of life. Admittedly, they initially attracted the least capable, the 'least peasant-like', but many others, perfectly suited to working the land, followed suit. Nevertheless, we see today a proletarian class that is as bio-psychologically distinct from the peasant class as is possible. Similarly, to return to our previous example, the European aristocracy of the Ancien Régime was of a very different type from the bourgeoisie, in the true sense of the word, from which it was continually recruited. Vacher de Lapouge rightly notes that chroniclers of the time always describe the medieval lord as tall, slender and fair-haired, whilst the peasant appears as short, stocky and dark-skinned. The mental qualities were, of course, no less distinct. Undoubtedly

Certain members of the nobility were individuals who stood out from their social class of origin. But most differed from their original social milieu only in the degree of their qualities: they proved to be braver, bolder, more intelligent, better suited to leadership, and physically lighter than the majority of their peers. A few generations were sufficient, with the aid of marriages, to incorporate the newcomers into the old nobility, without the characteristics of the latter being altered.

There is nothing surprising about this phenomenon. The newly ennobled and their descendants felt the pressure of the new environment in which they lived. Instead of obeying, they gave orders. Instead of wielding tools or driving the plough, they rode horses and fought. Instead of subsisting mainly on flour and meat from domestic animals, they ate game and often replaced water with alcohol. The moral values to which they were subject were no longer the same. Their bodies and minds were transformed as they adapted to their new existence. From peasants or burghers, they became lords.

We can now see the dual relationship that exists between function and the human biotype. Function attracts, and consequently selects, individuals who possess the type corresponding to its needs; yet the relatively unsuitable type adapts to the function and is modified under its influence. If it is correct to say that, in a community of still imperfect homogenisation, ethnic survivals constitute, like biopsychic mutations, a factor in functional adaptation, it is no less correct to assert that function creates 'race', that is to say, forms homogeneous biopsychic groups according to a process similar to that which gives rise to accidentally differentiated ethnic groups.

111. The importance of functional differentiation

The functional typology of social groups is, therefore, relative—just like that of races: it is based on the frequency with which certain characteristics appear, characteristics which are only exceptionally found all together in a single individual. It is easy—and sociology and psychology have often done so—to verify the existence, not of a single functional type per group, but of several, as well as to establish on an experimental basis the similarities that are observed in this or that field between types belonging to different groups. Between the aristocrat and the 'middle-class' intellectual there may be – and generally is – less difference from one perspective or another than between that aristocrat and the landed gentry, whilst the latter often resembles the peasants more, in terms of one trait or another, than his peers.

What does this phenomenon signify? Simply that each social stratum or class actually encompasses a multitude of diverse professions that constitute functional subcategories, to which distinct biotypes correspond. The non-nobility includes statesmen, military personnel, diplomats, intellectuals and peasants; the proletariat includes dockers, mechanics, engravers, etc. The so-called

are even more complex. But certain professions are found across several strata. Hence, common characteristics override the distinguishing ones. It is rightly said of the nobleman: he is a peasant, but he will not be confused with peasants of a different social background, even those infinitely richer than himself.

In other words, social hierarchy takes precedence over professional differentiation, but the latter nevertheless influences the various levels of social stratification. There is, therefore, a vertical – hierarchical – differentiation and a horizontal – professional – differentiation, the effects of which combine. Generally speaking, the former is the more profound. It will be easier for a docker to become a mechanic than a diplomat, just as it will be easier for a nobleman to become a soldier rather than a farmer. If one doubts the effectiveness of hereditary functional differentiation, one need only recall Trotsky's disillusioned remark about 'the proletariat's congenital inability to become a ruling class', or compare a few randomly selected portraits of members of the former Russian aristocracy with photographs of certain leaders of the current bureaucracy who have risen from the lower strata of the population, before time has had a chance to do its work.

The biopsychic stratification of society is so pronounced that it sometimes transcends—without, of course, obliterating—the differences between the major races. A Japanese aristocrat, of relatively tall stature, with an elongated skull, a fine face, round eyes and qualities of leadership, courage and honour, is often closer, even from a physical point of view, to a European aristocrat than to his compatriot of coarse build, short stature, slanted eyes and a flat nose.

112. Natural selection

Functional differentiation, of course, operates only within the framework of the ethnic group in question. Through selection and education, it develops the potential of the human 'raw material' at its disposal, which depends essentially on race, but also on the current state of that race. It is not, in fact, irrelevant whether the race is young or old. A race is young when its members have retained simple living conditions, without having been forced to adapt greatly or, consequently, to choose much from among their natural possibilities. A comparison will help us understand the problem better: a gifted child may choose between a scientific education and a humanistic one, but a man of sixty will be unable to revisit the choice that shaped his mind once and for all, and any functional change will be ineffective in this regard.

Nor is it irrelevant whether a race is strong or degenerate, for its distinctive characteristics possess a fundamental qualitative dimension; and this dimension, like the characteristics themselves, is not identical in all members of the ethnic group observed at a given point in its history. Certain individuals are alcoholics, syphilitics, undernourished or simply weak. Others, by contrast, are in

full possession of all the race's resources. Under primitive conditions of existence, the weak perish before they have been able to procreate. The 'raw material' upon which functional differentiation acts therefore possesses, thanks to natural selection, a maximum of possibilities.

Hence, from a biopsychic perspective, the social order demands not only functional differentiation but also, and above all, the elimination of inferior elements—that is to say, of those who are functionally useless or socially dangerous. Without such a purge, the race degenerates (see Paragraph 231). The possible birth of a heredosyphilitic genius does not compensate for the essential decline of the Community. Nor does it appear, moreover, that the centuries which enjoyed the effects of natural selection were any poorer in superior men than our own.

It is, of course, impossible to encourage famine and epidemics, or to restore war to its former state, when it eliminated the weakest combatants. Nor can we consider undoing the advances of medicine or reserving its benefits for the superior few. Today's humanitarian sentiment, on the other hand, stands against any attempt at the physical elimination of the degenerate. A return to natural selection therefore seems highly unlikely in the current state of our civilisation and in the foreseeable future.

113. Social selection.

What matters fundamentally, however, is not the physical elimination of these residual individuals but the prevention of their reproduction—that is to say, the transmission of the genes that govern their tragic inferiority. The madman who has killed is confined, purely for defensive purposes and without any intention of punishment. But the creation of a lineage of the mentally deficient is far more serious, both for society and for its direct victims, than a crime that merely takes a life. Some contemporary communities apply, or have recently applied, measures ranging from a ban on marriage to sterilisation. Nevertheless, the principle of biosocial defence is far from being generally accepted. There is no doubt, however, that the free reproduction of the mentally deficient doubly violates natural law: that of the child born to possess its biopsychic integrity, and that of society to protect its genetic pool against negative influences.

The measures in question are clearly applicable only to individuals suffering from a pathological condition. They serve neither to preserve nor, even less, to restore the proper balance between the various qualitative strata. In this field, there are no alternatives other than to promote the birth rate among families of a higher biopsychic level, to provide the most gifted individuals with the specialised education they need to fully develop their potential, and to align, through appropriate legislation, functional stratification with qualitative stratification.

This final aspect of the problem does not in any way necessitate the transformation of social strata into castes, provided that there is no ethnic differentiation between the various social strata. Mutants who emerge without the laws governing their sudden appearance yet being known—that is to say, individuals who display characteristics superior to those of their birth stratum—cannot be condemned to social stagnation. But true mutants are few. They are often confused with individuals who differ qualitatively—and not essentially—from their milieu of origin. The personal worth of such gifted individuals, in the relative sense of the word, is not to be disregarded. We know, in fact (see Paragraph 110), that hereditary development for and through function can, over time, accomplish the work that mutation achieves in a single stroke. All historical aristocracies enriched and renewed themselves, over the centuries, by incorporating the rising elements from the lower strata. Pre-liberal society thus applied measures of social selection that complemented the effects of natural selection. The current survival and proliferation of the weak make the selection and proper placement of the superior elements even more necessary than before. Carrel, who was by no means a utopian, even believed that it would be possible to reconstitute, on the basis of lineages that had preserved the indispensable characteristics and of gifted individuals, a new hereditary aristocracy in communities whose biopsychic social order had been subverted by egalitarianism (see Paragraph 189) and by the reverse selection resulting from economic differentiation (see Paragraph 193).

114. Generational stratification.

We cannot conclude this chapter without referring to social stratification based on age. It is obvious, and we have already mentioned this previously (see Section 100), that children suffer, in relation to adults, from a temporary inferiority that gradually disappears over the years. Adults, in turn, lose part of their capacity over time. Regardless, therefore, of the qualitative stratification we have analysed in the previous sections, we can divide the population of any community into generational strata.

The word ‘generation’ is very clear when used in the context of a family. Grandparents, parents, children, grandchildren, etc. constitute distinct age groups, clearly defined in relation to one another and separated by average age differences that vary, depending on race and era, between twenty and thirty years. The concept becomes dangerously vague when applied to a broader social group. A fifty-year-old man will refer to ‘the previous generation’ when thinking of his father, who is seventy-five. But a forty-year-old man will think in the same terms of his father, who is sixty. And we do not know whether we should place in the same generational stratum the two individuals who, in our example, are respectively fifty and sixty years old, or those who are sixty and seventy-five.

In the practice of sociological analysis, the term 'generation' only acquires a precise meaning when it refers to an event that has marked a break in historical development. It is thus applied to all individuals of similar age from the point of view of biopsychic development who have been decisively affected by the change that has taken place. Thus, with regard to Europe, we speak properly of 'the war generation' and 'the post-war generation' to designate, in the first instance, all adults, then aged between twenty and fifty, who were directly or indirectly affected by the conflict; and, in the second, all those then aged between fifteen and twenty who were shaped by the years of relaxation that followed the conflict.

Generational stratification gives rise to differences and, at times, to antagonisms that divide parents and children within the family, as they adopt different attitudes towards life. It also creates divisions within the community between those who have suffered and those who have not been subjected to a particular historical pressure, due to their conflicting views of the world and, in particular, of the social order. It is, therefore, a question of receptivity rather than age, but age is a fundamental factor in malleability and, consequently, in receptivity.

XI. MIGRATION

115. Definitions.

Only societies at a very low level of civilisation sometimes maintain a stable population, in both quantitative and qualitative terms, over significant periods of their historical development. For it is only in these that the natural and social factors of demographic equilibrium (see paragraphs 82 and 83) exert their full influence on a constant basis, whilst their maximum potential for qualitative development has either been realised or is held back by unfavourable living conditions. In the other regions, constant demographic changes occur, arising either from internal variations—which we have already analysed in the previous chapters—or from migratory factors.

In the broadest sense of the word, migration refers to any act, whether voluntary or forced, whereby an individual or a group of people leaves their place of residence to settle in another territory. General sociology, however, narrows the scope of the concept. On the one hand, it does not concern itself with individual migrations, unless their scale makes them a social phenomenon. On the other hand, it is not concerned with the constant or chronic movements of nomadic groups across uninhabited areas. In such cases, in fact, neither the population nor the structures of the communities in question change. On the contrary, these remain unchanged, from the aforementioned perspectives, thanks to the

movement around which they are organised and which enables them to maintain a consistently identical geo-economic framework. Once the natural resources available in an area have been exhausted, a hunting or pastoral tribe needs to move to another territory where it can once again find the living conditions to which it is adapted. For such a tribe, the change of geographical space is, therefore, a factor of demographic and structural permanence.

General sociology is concerned only with migration that brings about social change. Such changes can affect the community that is moving or losing members, as well as the community that receives the migrants or is formed by them. Hence, the phenomenon of migration must be approached from a dual perspective: that of the community of origin, in which case we speak of *emigration;* and that of the receiving community, in which case we are dealing with *immigration.* It is also necessary to distinguish between *external migration,* where the population movement takes place from one community to another, and *internal migration,* which refers to population movements occurring within the geographical area of a single community. Finally, we must consider separately *irreversible migration* – the only type studied by sociology until very recently – and *temporary migration* – particularly that arising from tourism – which has recently acquired considerable importance.

116. Global migration and partial migration.

The earliest migrations of which we have historical knowledge – at least through their effects – are those involving entire peoples. We are not referring here to population movements towards uninhabited lands, such as those of the Mongol tribes who crossed from Asia to America via the Bering Strait – these are of interest to the historian but not to the sociologist, as we have seen in the previous section – but rather to the movements of entire peoples towards territories already occupied by indigenous groups or those who had arrived earlier. We are thinking in particular of the global displacement of the Aryan peoples who, in successive waves, migrated from Central Asia to India, Iran and Europe. And, more recently, of the Turanian tribes who, having left Turkestan, settled in Central Europe, and of the Mongol hordes who settled in Russia. In such cases, we are dealing with social groups which, for one reason or another, collectively abandon the territories in which they lived to overcome foreign populations and, over time, intermingle to some extent with them. Such migrations therefore have a dual social consequence: the disappearance of the original community and the formation of a new one with different structures and, at times, a different ethnic substrate. In the contemporary world, the phenomenon has occurred only on a smaller scale, as was the case, after the Second World War, with the Prussian population displaced to West Germany.

Partial migrations, which are more varied in nature, have, on the contrary, been a constant feature of history. Whenever the necessary conditions are met, they occur in every era and among all peoples. Greece and Phoenicia gave rise to

cities throughout the Mediterranean basin. Rome settled entire provinces of the Empire with its own citizens. North America, Australia and parts of South America owe almost their entire population to migrants from Europe. In some cases, the new arrivals coexist alongside other racial groups, whether indigenous or immigrant, as in South Africa, or intermingle with them, as in most of Central and South America. The new communities owe much, if not everything, to immigrants, but their structures, except perhaps where the family unit is concerned, are unique. Their constituent elements—individuals or families—came, in effect, in isolation, separating themselves from communities that continued their historical evolution without them.

To round off our analysis, let us mention the intermediate phenomenon of dispersion, whereby an entire people emigrates but its members are distributed across several communities. It is, therefore, a case of mass emigration resulting in partial immigration. The most famous example is that of the Jewish diaspora in the 1st century. Similarly, after the Second World War, some republics of the Soviet Union were dismantled through the dispersal of all their inhabitants, who were deported separately to Siberia and the southern Asian provinces.

117. Voluntary and forced migration.

Our previous examples lead us to distinguish, in the context of migration, between those movements that result from a free decision by those who move and those that are the result of human imposition. In practice, however, this distinction is not always as straightforward as it seems at first glance.

There are, of course, instances of migration that are unquestionably voluntary. The Italian peasant who, between 1860 and 1914, left his country to 'make his fortune' in Argentina; the Englishman, Irishman or German who emigrated to the United States in search of better living conditions; or the Jew who left Western Europe for the New World in search of commercial opportunities – all acted of their own volition. No one forced them to do so, nor was there any external pressure, save for a comparative assessment of their current situation and the possibilities offered in other lands. The global migrations of the yellow races, who at various times advanced into Europe with the aim of conquest, were also indisputably voluntary.

We know, on the contrary, of instances of forced displacement – both individual and on a global scale – that have left a deep mark on history. The slave trade, to which the Americas owe a significant proportion of their population, is the clearest example of a demographic movement, spanning several centuries, that was imposed by force upon its victims. The expulsion by the Soviets of the population from the German provinces annexed by Russia and Poland offers us a recent example of forced migration on a global scale. And the Jewish *diaspora*, a characteristic case of forced emigration combined with voluntary dispersion.

More difficult to define are population movements stemming from political, racial or religious persecution. Can the emigration of an individual who has no alternative but death or imprisonment be called voluntary? The authorities in their country do not expel them: on the contrary, they try to detain them. However, the persecuted person does not decide freely: circumstances drive them to defend their natural right to life and liberty. But it is also true that the same could be said of an individual fleeing from hunger that threatens, if not their very existence, at least the minimum conditions for their personal and family fulfilment. Even more difficult to define from the perspective of this analysis is the migratory process triggered not by direct persecution but by a mere situation of unrest, such as that suffered by the Jews in the Tsarist empire. Nor can we clearly categorise migrations caused, without any threat to individual freedom or property, by the curtailment of collective activities of a religious, cultural or national nature. It is logical that a group of people who are forbidden to practise their religion publicly or to use their language, or who are simply subject to a foreign authority, should seek to escape from a situation that is adverse to them and choose –
Freely? – Emigration.

118. Emigration: its causes.

As we have just seen, the causes of the migration phenomenon are manifold. We can, however, group them into three categories: socio-economic causes, demographic causes and political causes, taking the latter term in its broadest sense. Nothing prevents, of course, factors of different kinds from combining to trigger the same process.

A typical example of socio-economic emigration can be seen in Rome's establishment of settlements in distant provinces. The transformation of the Roman regime from an aristocratic to an oligarchic one had led, despite the agrarian reform, to an extreme concentration of rural property. Since, on the other hand, most trades were carried out by slaves, free men lacked the means of subsistence. The distribution of conquered lands thus resolved an economic and social problem. But it also eliminated a powerful source of discontent and thus had political motivations and implications. Centuries later, the causes of the slave trade were purely economic, driven by the demand for labour from the sugar mills and plantations of the Americas and by the greed of traffickers, African petty kings, and Arab and European merchants. And it was the desire to find wealth, or at least better material living conditions, that led so many peasants from the Old World to emigrate in the 19th and early 20th centuries.

Although they are always intertwined with economic factors, the demographic causes of migration run much deeper than the former. They do not, in fact, relate to accidental or individual circumstances—

but rather to overpopulation (see Paragraph 185). When, at a stabilised level of development, the population of a territory exceeds the level permitted by the optimal population density, the logical solution is to relocate the surplus population. Thus the ancient Greek cities, with limited territory and arid soil, periodically restored their demographic balance by establishing colonies, a solution which was not without economic and political motives. Irish emigration in the last century, despite its spontaneous nature, was driven by motives of the same kind, although the individual decisions taken in this regard stemmed from economic, political and religious causes.

Whether viewed from the perspective of the community that expels, directly or indirectly, a group of people, or in terms of the more or less free choice of the migrants themselves, political factors always lead to an incompatibility of coexistence. Either a state regards the presence within the community of elements that are racially, culturally or ideologically heterogeneous as dangerous or simply undesirable, or those elements find themselves uncomfortable and, at times, insecure under a foreign authority. The emigration, whether forced or voluntary, of the latter restores the Community's cohesion and enables the members of the unassimilated group to find more satisfactory living conditions in other lands. Of course, the situation takes on very special characteristics when it involves the deportation by a conquering power of the inhabitants of an annexed territory. The aforementioned forced emigration of the Germans from East Prussia, that of the Muslims from Palestine and that of the Franco-Algerians, for example, constituted unilateral solutions, achieved at the expense of the rights of the displaced populations.

119. Emigration: its consequences.

Whilst the sociologist is interested in all the causes, including individual ones, of the phenomenon of migration, since the process in question depends on them, he or she only takes into account the social consequences that it produces.

From the perspective of the community of origin, all emigration has a fundamental effect that is always the same, though its impact varies considerably depending on the circumstances: a quantitative loss of population. In the extreme case of a mass exodus or total dispersal, the territory occupied by the community is emptied, becoming available to the instigator of the process or to some future colonising people, and there is nothing more to be said on the matter. But when, on the contrary, the process is only partial, the issue of its positive and/or negative consequences must be addressed.

It is clear, first of all, that—barring pathological cases—every human being possesses a certain actual or potential capacity for production. When the community is deprived of an individual, it therefore loses that person's actual or potential output. If current producers emigrate, the consequences are obviously negative,

as are, to an even greater extent, those resulting from the departure of children – potential producers who are currently unproductive – despite the initial increase in welfare brought about by the removal of consumers who do not meet their needs through their own labour. From a quantitative point of view, emigration is positive only when it allows the optimal population density to be maintained or restored, that is, when it excludes from the Community potential producers who, due to a lack of resources, could never become effective producers, thus remaining unproductive consumers. We already know, however (see Paragraph 81), that optimal population density is a function of the level of development. The foregoing therefore applies to a community which, for one reason or another, has no possibility of improving its rates of utilisation of existing resources or of finding new resources in this field. By permitting and even encouraging emigration, pre-fascist Italy partially resolved the problem of unemployment but lost potential which, as subsequent history demonstrated, could have been realised to absorb the unemployed labour force and improve the country's level of development.

The quantitative aspect of immigration is not, however, the most important. Whether viewed positively or negatively from this perspective, emigration has very different consequences depending on the calibre of those who leave. It is not the same for a community to lose manual labourers—who, ultimately, can be replaced by machines—as it is to lose intellectuals and technicians, who are indispensable to progress in any field. The skilled emigration that has been taking place since the Second World War from Europe and Argentina to the United States is, certainly, far more serious for their communities of origin than the movement of labour that occurred in the last century to the same destination, even though this created, as in the case of Germany, demographic gaps that could not be filled. The emigration of unskilled labour (see Paragraph 103) is positive in all cases. That of *assimilators* may or may not be so. That of *achievers and,* above all, of *creators* is always catastrophic, especially in our time, when numbers are losing much of their former importance as a factor of power.

120. Biotypology of the emigrant.

It remains to be seen whether there are any social laws governing the qualitative characteristics of migrants, or whether the voluntary movement of people is driven by subjective factors that manifest themselves indiscriminately across all biosocial types. It is very common to encounter judgements on this subject that are as categorical as they are unfounded, and no one will ever be able to ascertain, on the basis of such arbitrary and often self-serving assertions, whether the Gaelic peoples reached the Atlantic first because they were the most daring or because they fled more swiftly than the others...

In this analysis, let us set aside nomadic groups, whose territorial instability stems from constant necessities, and, of course, forced migrants, whose displacement is due to causes beyond their control. Let us therefore consider exclusively those individuals who, whilst able to remain in their homeland, choose to integrate into foreign communities, either alone or accompanied by their families. We shall immediately note that they all share a common characteristic: they are uprooted, at once ill-adapted to their living conditions and willing to sever the ties that bind them to their geosocial environment. They are independent, both materially and psychologically, from the community of which they form part, whether because they feel different from its other members, or because they have the impression – whether well-founded or not – that they are rejected by it. Hence there are two types of emigrants: the *adventurer* and the *outcast.*

The adventurer, of a slender build (see Section 102), emigrates in search of environmental conditions—far from a setting that limits his opportunities for self-realisation—which will allow him to fully realise his will to power. Whether *a creator or an achiever,* he does not find in his community of origin the place he believes he deserves, and does not hesitate to go and conquer it in other lands. Adventurers were the Conquistador, the second son of a noble family, and the buccaneer who, for a wide variety of reasons, set out for the Americas a few centuries ago. Today, an adventurer is the intellectual – in the broadest sense of the word – who leaves his homeland to find a more favourable environment for his research in another country. This superior type of emigrant generally includes the political refugee as well, even though adventure is not their goal but the cause of their persecution. And also the religious non-conformist.

The outcast represents the almost perfect antithesis of the previous type. He is a conformist or, at times, a brute, generally of slight build, who emigrates due to relative incapacity, due to an extreme inferiority that prevents him from maintaining his position and, in extreme cases, even from surviving in his native land. When a natural disaster, such as the potato blight in Ireland, or a population growth outpacing technical development creates an excess of population in a given territory, those who have no choice but to leave are those who are unable to defend themselves effectively against the vital competition of the fittest: the poorest peasants, the poorest labourers, the poorest traders; and also unskilled labourers, who in normal times were already marginalised.

This two-tiered migration process thus leads to settlement areas being populated by individuals of a higher social standing and those of a much lower standing, with almost no middle ground. In the case of colonies or provinces far removed from the metropolis, the former are bolstered by officials sent by the central government, whilst the latter are often made up of criminals subject to deportation orders. There is, of course, no constant relationship between the *elite* and the mass of emigrants. But it is obvious that the former group is always numerically minuscule compared to the latter.

121. Immigration: the process of assimilation

Upon arriving in their destination country, the emigrant – now an immigrant – suddenly finds themselves in a new world into which they must integrate and, consequently, adapt. Unless they are absorbed into an ethnic or national minority of the same origin, they must modify their behaviour and, to some extent, their way of thinking in order to live harmoniously with the local population and find a satisfactory place within the community. Thus begins, for them, a process of assimilation that may be more or less lengthy and more or less successful.

The pace and effects of this process depend fundamentally on the degree of affinity between the immigrant and the human environment in which they must find their place. Race constitutes an almost insurmountable barrier in this respect, particularly in the case of fundamentally distinct ethnic groups (see Paragraph 93), as a system of segregation arises spontaneously – as in the case of England following the Second World War with immigration from the West Indies – which can only be overcome through a long process of intermingling (see Paragraph 92).

Civilisation and culture – and especially language – play a secondary role for pre-existing family groups. In Boston, the English assimilate much more easily than the Italians, whilst the exact opposite is true in Buenos Aires. Germans in the United States assimilate more quickly into the population than those in Brazil. However, religion takes precedence over other superstructural factors in the case of single immigrants and, in all cases, for the second generation, as marriage depends largely on it. Where applicable, the national pride of immigrants acts against assimilation, as is evident among the Japanese in Brazil, particularly when this is reinforced by their concentration in large communities. Propaganda from the country of origin may influence the process, as was seen among groups of Italian and German immigrants before the Second World War, but it does not determine it. The 'Franco-Americans' of New England, descendants of Canadian immigrants from the last century, still retain their language and continue to call themselves French despite their American citizenship and two and a half centuries of separation from the mother country. They resist assimilation even with the Irish, who are Catholic like them.

Finally, the immigrant's personal characteristics come into play. Men adapt more easily than women, children more easily than adults, extroverts more easily than introverts, and those who assimilate more easily than those who seek self-fulfilment or those who are unrefined, although the capacity for assimilation among creative types varies greatly. Also, as far as the host community is concerned, the ease with which newcomers are accepted plays a role, both from a structural point of view and in terms of psychosocial attitudes. But, generally speaking, immigration countries are open and welcoming. They are, however, far more so towards the 'inferiors' – those who can be utilised – than towards the 'superiors', whose very capabilities the ruling class fears.

leader. The 'householders' naturally prefer to take on servants rather than competitors who might displace them.

122. Immigration: its consequences.

Immigration therefore poses serious threats to the demographic homogeneity of the host country. Racial groups that are fundamentally distinct may become entrenched within the population, as is the case with Black people in the United States and Jews everywhere, with no alternative but eventual intermarriage, which would lower the standard of the community's ethnic foundation. Let us note, however, that the substantial transformation of a host country through the incorporation of a wave of immigrants is not always negative. The population of Argentina today, which is strongly European, fortunately bears little resemblance to what it was – almost entirely mixed-race – a hundred years ago, before the mass arrival of Italians and Spaniards.

Apart from the potential risks of social fragmentation and the possibility of fundamental demographic shifts, immigration almost always has two consequences that are as counterproductive as they are inevitable. The first is a decline in quality. Indeed, in every wave of migration, the numerical ratio of superior to inferior individuals is far lower than it was not only in the country or countries of origin but also in the country of destination, whose leadership has previously been shaped by a dual process of immigration and selection. At first, the influx of inferior individuals appears to enhance the Community's strength to the benefit of its existing members and, in particular, the ruling class. However, as they assimilate, the lower elements gradually mix with the original population. They cease to constitute a subordinate stratum, beneath the social body proper, in the manner of the slaves of Rome, and, like freedmen, they merge into the whole, if not absorb it. The qualitative level of the population declines and can only be raised through a long process of education and selection.

The other negative consequence – this time without exception – is the amorphous fragmentation of social structures. The immigrant lacks ties of any kind with the population into which he physically integrates. He generally arrives with his wife and children or marries a fellow countrywoman. He then isolates himself within his family unit, with no contact with his neighbours other than that dictated by his professional activities. Even when they form part of a national community concentrated in one place, they find themselves among strangers, and their relationships with them are far from replacing those they left behind in their home village, where everyone was more or less related, or even in the neighbourhood of their home town. The community thus tends to become a mosaic of almost isolated families.

Social fragmentation is even more evident in the realm of superstructural relations. The immigrant is unfamiliar with the country's history or, at the very least, does not regard it as part of their own heritage. They tend to criticise customs they do not share and remain detached from a traditional culture they are unable to fully embrace. Worse still: over time, their memories of their lost homeland become romanticised, and often the us-

A sense of alienation takes hold of him. He cares not a whit for his present life, let alone the future of the community of which he is a part, like a foreign body. And his children, torn between home and school, either opt for the former and continue to feel like emigrants, or allow themselves to be swayed by the education received in the latter and, despising their 'gringo' parents, sever or at least weaken their ties with the only group capable of providing them with a structural foundation. Hence the indifference and opportunism that characterise so many descendants of immigrants, foreigners in their own country.

123. Internal migration: geosocial instability.

Population movements between regions are not the only ones that historical observation and analysis allow us to verify. Indeed, however significant they may be, they are almost exceptional when compared with the movements that take place within the territory of each community. Except in cases of persecution, it is obviously easier for those who need – or simply choose – to leave their native soil to resettle within their own country and thus retain the benefits of their inherited and acquired adaptation to cultural conditions of life that will change only minimally. Not to mention the greater practical ease of moving a short distance.

Regardless of their immediate motivation, which we shall analyse in the following section, internal migrations depend fundamentally, on the one hand, on the hereditary characteristics – whether ethnic or acquired – of the human group within which they occur and, on the other, on the greater or lesser structural rigidity of that group. Just as there are migratory peoples who, collectively or individually, tend to move from country to country, there are those who are unstable within their own borders, whether due to biopsychic nomadism or a lack of attachment to the geosocial groups and communities of which they form part. Needless to say, what we have just said regarding peoples applies, within each of them, to the various biotypological strata.

It is no coincidence that, among the settled peoples of the West, the most geosocially unstable are the Americans. In the United States, relocation is almost the norm. People move house, city and state with the greatest of ease and with astonishing frequency. Nothing could be more logical, however. This is, in fact, a population composed largely of the children, grandchildren and great-grandchildren of immigrants who have nomadism in their blood. The predominance of the Nordic race, more mobile than the Alpine, constitutes another hereditary factor contributing to the same tendency.

Equally significant factors contributing to geosocial instability are the lack of differentiation between social forms and structural amorphism. A people with a long history and a rich culture is always characterised, on the one hand, by the great variety of its groups and intermediate communities, and, on the other, by its customs. The individual is not merely a unit within an undifferentiated whole, and it is not the same for them to find themselves in

this or that place, for any place other than one's own would require an effort to adapt—that is to say, an effort that is not necessarily successful. If, on the other hand, uniformity prevails, geographical relocation will not entail a significant change in living conditions. The Provençal who settles in Brittany finds himself in a new world. But the American who moves from New York to Chicago or even to San Francisco barely feels the effects of his move, as if he had merely changed houses. If, moreover, he has no more stable social ties – and to a certain extent – than those that bind him to the other members of his family, reduced to the nuclear couple, he leaves nothing behind and his place of residence is of no consequence to him. That is why the farm labourer emigrates more easily than the landowning peasant, the wage earner than the entrepreneur, the intellectual than the bureaucrat, the failure than the person who holds a prominent position in their local community. It is no coincidence that we observe in history that internal migrations are always inversely proportional to the strength of social structures. There were none in the Middle Ages, save in the event of catastrophes, when each person performed their role by hereditary right, with a customary and even legal prohibition against abandoning it.

124. Internal migration: causes and consequences.

Apart from the underlying factors we have just analysed, internal migration is, of course, driven in each case by immediate causes. These are generally the same as those mentioned above (see Paragraph 118) for cross-border migration, with the exception of policy factors: the search for new sources of income and demographic pressure. Occasionally, however, other, entirely unforeseeable reasons may arise. Such as, for example, laws on the compulsory partition of inheritance, which, by encouraging smallholdings, have contributed powerfully to the depopulation of the European countryside; the mechanisation of agriculture, which is reducing the need for rural labour; and, in the United States, the introduction of 'air conditioning' in factories, which enabled the industrialisation of the southern states.

Rural migration to the cities deserves special mention, given its scale and characteristics; it is a phenomenon that has been ongoing for two hundred years. Its immediate cause is capitalist industrialisation, which has led to an ever-increasing demand for labour from factories established in urban centres. Drawn by the lights of the city, the peasant abandons his traditional way of life, breaks with his social environment – including his family – and comes to settle in a dreary and unsanitary suburb. Rural provinces are becoming depopulated or, at the very least, are not growing, demographically speaking, at the same rate as the country as a whole. Large cities, where industries tend to locate in order to be close to a large consumer market and have access to adequate transport links, are swelling to monstrous proportions.

From this dual consequence arises another type of migration: that which drains people from rural areas and small towns towards the major industrial centres, to

young people from the middle classes in search of better living conditions. The rise in industrial activity and the increasing concentration of the population have, in fact, led to a constant supply of administrative and technical posts and a growing demand for services of all kinds, largely met by internal migration.

As we have known for two centuries, these population movements have a dual catastrophic consequence: the qualitative impoverishment of rural areas and the increased imbalance in large cities. On the one hand, the best-educated and most genetically gifted young people of each generation leave their homeland, potentially leaving the local population without its leading figures. On the other hand, and with a few individual exceptions, they do not find meaningful roles in the receiving centres and instead swell the ranks of the already bloated and largely parasitic middle classes, where they become frustrated.

In industrialised countries, however, a trend towards decentralisation has been evident since before the Second World War; whilst this does not relieve congestion in large population centres, it does tend to curb their growth. Small towns are becoming industrialised, whilst large manufacturing plants are relocating to the countryside. This phenomenon suggests a return to geo-economic equilibrium and, consequently, a more satisfactory distribution of the population. The only thing that appears to be irreversible is the decline in the agricultural workforce, displaced by machinery.

125. Migration planning.

Given the significant impact of a process capable of altering the human fabric of a community both quantitatively and qualitatively—and even, in the case of a country of immigration, of transforming its racial makeup, as is happening in Argentina with the mass influx of Indians and mestizos from neighbouring countries—it is logical that states have sought to regulate population movements. Naturally, the interests of the two sides are at odds: a country of emigration will seek to retain its best and brightest, whilst a country of immigration will select the individuals it admits. In the former case, however, police-style measures are generally ineffective, and only satisfactory living and working conditions will achieve the desired result. Conversely, immigration can be controlled through the proper screening, by administrative means, of applicants.

The possibility of enhancing a community's genetic makeup through the influx of superior elements exists, at the very least, in those countries towards which a spontaneous migratory flow is directed. The temptation of quantity and, in particular, of cheap and therefore lower-quality labour unfortunately often has a negative impact. But even setting that aside, the selection factors to be considered – race, biotype, culture, language, religion,

professional training, health and capacity for assimilation – are so numerous and sometimes present themselves in such contradictory ways that the task is by no means easy.

There is no doubt, however, that there is a necessary order among the factors mentioned, and that race comes first. One may cure a sick person, educate an illiterate person, teach the language to a non-native speaker, and even convert a follower of a foreign religion; one may, albeit more slowly, select an elite from a qualitatively inferior population; but one cannot transform a black person into a white person, nor vice versa. The Sicilian assimilates perfectly and rapidly in Argentina; but he introduces into the country's gene pool genes of Semitic origin, with all the consequences that entails.

From the fundamental perspective of ethnic selection, two schools of thought are at odds. The first affirms the principle of blood affinity. A racial group, whether existing or in the process of formation, should incorporate only elements similar to, or even identical with, those it already possesses. This was the basis of the US immigration law, in force until 1966, which considerably restricted the entry of non-Nordic whites and prohibited that of people of colour. It should be noted, however, that, as far as whites were concerned, nationality rather than race was the determining factor: hence the paradoxical consequence of substantial Jewish immigration under legislative provisions intended to favour the arrival of British and German immigrants. The other school of thought is that of racial compensation. Often, this principle gives rise, among laypeople, to calculations based on fanciful chemistry. But, in its scientific form, it affirms the real fact that a racial group can be improved through a superior heterogeneous contribution.

On the one hand, therefore, there is greater concern for racial homogeneity and, consequently, for assimilation. On the other hand, there is a predominant concern for the intrinsic value of the expected contribution. It should be noted, however, that the theory of affinity does not prevent multi-ethnic countries, such as the United States and even Brazil, from limiting its application to the superior race, and that the theory of compensation does not underestimate the danger of the non-assimilation of too many heterogeneous elements. The two theories therefore complement each other, with affinity or compensation predominating, depending on the case.

126. Temporary migration

Apart from the migrations which, viewed on our historical timescale, we might call permanent, there have always been temporary movements of individuals or groups: the 'journeys' referred to in everyday language. Since the application of the steam engine to transport, this phenomenon has taken on a quantitative significance that has been growing, particularly since the Second World War. Its demographic impact is such today that we cannot fail to analyse it in this chapter.

There are three types of temporary migration, defined according to their causes. Some are a consequence of modern warfare waged with armies of conscripts. In the great conflicts of our century, millions of prisoners of war were used, for years, as agricultural and industrial labourers and enjoyed, in enemy territory, a regime of semi-freedom and even mere forced residence.

It is inevitable that young men, mixed with a predominantly female population – due to the conscription of men of military age – will leave a noticeable mark on the genetic makeup of the host society. The occupation of the defeated country has the same effect, which, in our time, usually lasts for decades.

The presence in the Rhineland, following the First World War, of French troops of colour brought into sharp relief the demographic consequences of this phenomenon, given the large number of mixed-race children born in the region. Yet this is but one aspect—albeit the most serious—of a broader situation that has recurred across almost all of Europe since 1945.

Temporary migration of the second type is driven by work-related reasons and has similar consequences to the former. Bolivian and Chilean workers who travel to Argentina every year for a few weeks to work in the sugarcane harvest and sheep shearing; Algerians who go to France for a few years as factory labourers; and Portuguese, Spanish, Italian, Greek and Turkish workers who go to Germany, Switzerland, Sweden, etc., to fulfil a fixed-term employment contract, live alongside the local population, and their sexual relationships with local women are inevitable, not to mention those who, legally or otherwise, manage to become permanent residents. Foreign elements are thus introduced into the genetic makeup of the host populations, whose racial composition changes at a more or less gradual pace but in an inescapable manner.

Finally, there are temporary migrations, which are quite different in nature and are driven by tourism. Until the middle of the 20th century, such population movements were numerically very small and affected only a few European cities and regions – Paris, Rome, Switzerland, the Côte d'Azur, the Italian Riviera – to which only families of high social standing travelled. Today, by contrast, millions of travellers 'invade' the host countries for a few weeks every year.

'Quality' tourism had no social consequences for the host regions, but it did have an impact on the countries of origin, to which it brought cultural elements – both psychological and material – that contributed to their development: a process that continues to this day, albeit to a lesser extent, in the case of the Americas.

"Mass" tourism, on the other hand, has no appreciable influence on those who practise it, but it does have an impact on the population of the host countries. Not so much

From a biosocial perspective, although certain exchanges in this field cannot be ruled out, such as those relating to psychosocial changes. It is tourism that has transformed the Swiss from warriors into hoteliers, instilling in them a servile mentality. To a greater or lesser extent, depending on their resilience, those countries which have more recently begun to benefit economically from the tourism 'industry' will undergo a similar transformation.

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BOOK THREE

DYNAMICS

XII SOCIAL EVOLUTION

127. Social changes

No community consists of social groups that remain forever identical to themselves and fixed once and for all in relation to one another in unchanging positions, as are the houses in a city. Each group is made up of living matter – individuals – and is constantly transforming in the course of its evolution, a synthetic result of the respective biopsychic evolutions of its components, even though the fundamental relationships between the latter remain unchanged. The family, for example, essentially involves the sexual relationship between a man and a woman. But its forms vary according to the personalities of its members and the circumstances that shape it. We know to what extent industrialisation has altered it. And no one can fail to observe that between the formation of the couple and their separation, the family structure passes through various, albeit linked, stages. Nevertheless, the family is a natural group possessing an unchanging biosocial foundation. This is not the case with groups and associations, born of contracts lacking necessary foundations, which might not exist or might take forms entirely different from those they currently have.

Whether natural or contractual, all social groups and associations must, moreover, in order to survive, adapt to their internal and external conditions of existence and, consequently, undergo constant change. Since their basic constituent elements change in their nature and form, and their other components are incidental, every community is inherently changeable. The relationships it establishes between the groups it brings together must obviously vary with these very groups. But the complex it constitutes is not a mere conglomerate, and any attempt to reduce it to its components comes up against the profound reality of the very essence of the unified whole. It is a matter of observation, indeed, that the Community possesses a life of its own, and that it is born, develops and dies just like individuals. History provides us with countless examples of such a phenomenon. Empires that for centuries dominated the known world have fallen into chaos. Nations once powerful and feared now languish in mediocrity, whilst Communities emerge, dominant, where yesterday there was nothing but a scattering of tribes or anarchic or subjugated peoples.

Within nations, regimes come and go, and the social structure is transformed before our very eyes. Whilst there are static laws of collective order—as we saw in the previous book—that is to say, constants which express the structural essence of the Community, there is none that can be isolated from historical evolution. Every Community is alive, and all life unfolds over time, not within an imposed framework but as a natural unity. Social life is change, the constant modification of the organic complex of relationships in accordance with unitary continuity. History is an uninterrupted creation of the present on the basis of the past. Every period or form that is isolated by a legitimate yet arbitrary operation of the intellect has its raison d'être, and its reason for being what it is, in the precedents that impose it, and it itself conditions the subsequent periods that arise from it. Each brings new elements and influences the rhythm of the evolution that gives it existence and value. The Community creates its history by asserting itself in the present through the adaptation of its circumstances to new conditions, and projects itself into the future with a mass of potentialities that it will have to actualise or consign to oblivion. Its being is inseparable from its evolution, just as its organisation is inseparable from its being.

128. The unity of the social complex

Social duration—that is to say, the changing evolution of the Community—or of one of its constituent elements considered in isolation—within its vital limits presents two aspects that are difficult to reconcile at first glance: the complexity of the individuals and groups that constitute it, and its essential unity.

Should we view this duality as a fatal and insoluble contradiction weighing upon human society—between, on the one hand, the countless selfish tendencies of individuals and groups, and, on the other, the Community animated and guided by a mysterious and ineffable force? This would imply forgetting that social life does not superimpose itself on the beings who develop within it but, on the contrary, is inherent in their nature (see Section 2). Yet individual opposition to collective needs is no less natural in human beings for that. Individuals have their own existence, needs and aspirations. They may well depend on society; yet this does not mean they do not engage in activity that cannot be synthetically reduced to social activity, just as the latter cannot be analytically reduced to individual data. The same applies to the constituent groups of any community, each of which possesses its own *private life*.

Even the most homogeneous communities harbour deep-seated antagonisms of a wide variety of kinds. Marxism has drawn attention to the economic class struggle, which does indeed predominate in contemporary society. But the reign of capitalism is relatively recent and limited in scope: for millennia, social groups developed without class relations having a significant impact on their historical existence. In reality, social antagonisms are as complex as human nature. Economic, religious, ethnic and cultural factors are intertwined with such complexity that analysing them is always

difficult. Interests and sentiments clash in a continuous yet ever-changing interplay, from which it is possible, at best, to grasp only a few essential or momentary constants.

What is certain is that any attempt to reduce to its simplest form the complexity we discover within social life comes up against the profound reality of social nature itself. What could be more unified, viewed from the outside, than a group of producers working together within a company? The work they create demands constant cooperation of forces. This proves the vitality of the workshop. However, the slightest observation reveals the powerful antagonisms that pit not only individuals but also the groups sharing the work against one another. Yet the workshop does not implode as a result of such a multifaceted internal conflict. On the contrary, it produces. In other words, the divergences and oppositions among social factors are constantly dominated by their unity—not a unity imposed from outside, like that of a gang of convicts, but one arising from the very confrontation between individuals and groups and from the necessity of their common activity.

We are thus faced with the following dilemma: either the social complexity from which antagonisms arise must be regarded as a flaw in the Community—which makes no sense, since sociability is inherent to human nature, which, moreover, exists only through diversity—or we must recognise that there is not, on the one hand, complexity and, on the other, unity of the social body, but rather unity of its essential complex, that is to say, that antagonisms are not harmful but, on the contrary, indispensable to the life of the Community. The unitarian interpretation that denies social contradictions or, at the very least, regards them as accidental anomalies, and the pluralist interpretation that hypostasises them, are two aspects of the same inability to grasp reality in its fullness.

129. Antagonisms and overcoming them.

To fully understand the process of social duration, we must go back to the beginning of our structural analyses. We saw, in fact (Paragraph 42), that the basic unit of any community, the family, consists of three or more individuals. Each of them has their own personality which they tend to realise, that is to say, to assert. In the group's coexistence, the vital force emanating from each individual encounters the limits of its expansion in the converging movements of the forces emanating from the other members of the group. Each tries to impose themselves on the others, and when selfishness prevails over the social instinct, we see one spouse killing the other or abandoning their family, or parents allowing their children to starve to death. But these are pathological cases. Normally, the antagonisms that arise between individual forces are subdued by the needs of group life, and the family functions as a whole of greater or lesser vigour. The same applies to social groups of other kinds and to associations.

We find the same situation in any intermediate community. Every social group, in seeking to fulfil its potential to the full, comes into contact, directly or indirectly, with other groups at the same structural level. If this contact stems from a mere parallel development, the groups involved adapt to one another to facilitate their coexistence. There will, therefore, be an interaction between them that will alter them all to some extent, but without affecting their respective dynamics. If, on the other hand, the contact stems from rivalry—that is to say, if it is impossible for the groups in question, through mere mutual adaptation, to coexist without limiting their self-assertion—then the contact turns into conflict: what is known as social antagonism.

There are several possible solutions to such a fundamental clash between two groups. One of them may destroy the other – the whole is then impoverished by the disappearance of one of its constituent elements – or absorb it, thereby eliminating the diversity of the former complex, which was a source of strength. It may also subjugate it, which entails a reduction in the subjugated force's strength, or enter into a compromise with it, relinquishing part of its potential assertiveness provided that the other acts in the same way: in the latter case, both groups are weakened to the detriment of the whole. Finally, there remains a satisfactory solution: the overcoming of antagonism through the synthesis of the conflicting forces, which simultaneously retain their individuality and, by each renouncing their negative tendencies, give rise to a unified super-force: that of the whole which asserts itself as such.

The concept of social synthesis has been seriously distorted by its Marxist interpretation, based on Hegelian idealism, according to which historical evolution is said to be the product of the antagonism between two classes that would disappear through revolutionary overcoming, giving rise to a third, unified current which, upon splitting into two, would once again create a dialectical conflict. In reality, neither are the antinomic forces limited to two, nor does the overcoming of their antagonisms cause them to disappear. Every social entity – whether an individual or a collective – projects itself as a force and clashes with all other entities which, through their action or mere presence, oppose its assertion. Antagonisms are, therefore, manifold. When they are overcome, the forces at play continue to exist at their own level but unify to express, at a higher structural level, the whole that encompasses them.

We can now complete the pyramid with which we represent (see Chapter V) the anatomy of the Community. We thus see that the groups and associations constituting its base assert themselves as forces whose antagonisms are overcome to create forces of synthesis, corresponding to the intermediate communities, which, through various degrees of progressive unification, overcome their own conflicts to form the unified dynamism of the Community. Not only do the various social forces subsist within the current in which the whole

is realised and projected, but they also enrich one another by not being squandered in counterproductive conflicts.

130. Guiding principle and purpose.

If social complexity is accompanied by an inherent internal anarchy arising from the spontaneous divergence of antagonistic forces, and if this complexity is nevertheless governed by the essential unity of the Community, it is clear that this unity is dynamic in nature. There is, in fact, no static unifying factor that can impose itself on forces that are by nature in flux, forces that would elude it by virtue of their very evolutionary mobility. We have just seen, moreover, that the forces emanating from social entities are antagonistic and divergent. Each of them develops in a certain direction, in accordance with the demands of the vital tendency it realises. But we know, on the other hand, that communal unity is the unity of the social complex and not a dynamic oneness achieved through the destruction of the internal forces of the whole. This means that social force is the synthetic resultant of the dynamic elements of the Community, upon which it imposes a unity of direction.

We must be careful, however, not to attribute a mechanical nature to this dialectic – '*poly-dialectic*' better captures the process. Society is human in all its aspects, and the direction of its constituent forces stems from intentions that are undoubtedly shaped by vital necessity, yet are free in the sense that they express the tendency of social entities towards their fulfilment. Each of these entities tends to assert itself according to the possibilities it possesses, choosing from among them those that best enable it to adapt to the conditions of its existence. The family transcends the personal tendencies of its members in a collective intention that develops according to the function of the group. The same applies to all other social groups and communities, each of which evolves according to the guiding intention that is peculiar to its being and, therefore, to its raison d'être. The Community, which is nothing other than the broadest of the social groups under consideration, is no exception.

Every organised community has a function that explains and justifies it. This function is expressed as a tendency within the whole to affirm what it is and to progress towards what it wishes to become. But to speak of progress – and without progress there would be no life – is to acknowledge the dynamic nature of the Community's guiding intention. This intention does not evolve at random. It possesses an order of its duration as well as an order of its structure: a certain relationship between its constituent forces, upon which the direction of its movement depends. But there is no order without purpose. Indeed, the communal intention seeks its full realisation through a constant choice, according to internal and external needs, amongst the possibilities of the whole that it both expresses and directs.

Social duration depends, therefore, on the nature and quality of the entity in question and on the circumstances of its evolution. Consequently, it is susceptible to change—

This involves a transformation not only of the environment but also of its dynamic 'raw material'. Let us make it clear, however, that social duration, although ultimately dependent on the life rhythms of the individuals who make up the Community and, consequently, on demographic factors, possesses a historical continuity of its own. One can act upon the guiding intention by modifying the terms of the *poly-dialectical* progression, but these would have to be radically and completely transformed, as would their material conditions of life, in order to break the momentum that defines the Community. This means that the Community would disappear, giving way to a new social entity that might well be built upon the remnants of the old but would be essentially distinct from it.

131. Struggle for life and solidarity.

The tendencies and forces of individuals, social groups and intermediate communities are thus dominated by the tendency and force of the Community. But how is the synthesis of individual and collective dynamisms achieved, when their respective guiding intentions naturally assert themselves in a contradictory manner, as we have just seen? (Paragraph 129) By their very nature, human beings tend towards self-realisation, but in doing so they come up against not only the material environment in which they are immersed but also the human environment that surrounds them. For them, self-realisation means competing, it means fighting with every weapon at their disposal at their level of civilisation. The Darwinists made this struggle for life the fundamental law of nature and regarded the interest that drives it as the sole motive of the living being. For them, social evolution is the result of the vital competition of each against all. Admittedly, the struggle for life cannot be denied. Social antagonisms are realities that arise spontaneously from the diversity of social entities – both individual and collective – from their natural inequality and from their tendency to impose themselves on their human environment as well as their material environment. However, general rivalry cannot be the sole, or even the principal factor in the Community's endurance, since the Community exists precisely to the extent that a principle of unity overcomes the conflicts that pit its constituent elements against one another.

Society is neither a mask that hypocrisy superimposes upon perpetual war, nor is it the miraculously unified outcome of divergent forces. A *poly-dialectic* according to which historical duration were simply the product of internal antagonisms would therefore overlook a factor more important than the struggle for life, since it governs and dominates it: the affirmation of the Community itself. A social whole that merely observed and endured the conflicts of its constituent elements would disintegrate. But we have seen, on the contrary (Paragraph 130), that the Community possesses a guiding intention that expresses it and directs it towards its own realisation. Everything happens, then, as if it were intervening in the struggle, opposing one solution and supporting another. The synthetic overcoming in which social contradictions are resolved appears to be the creation of an autonomous force that imposes itself upon the antagonisms and trans-

in accordance with the common good. Overcoming natural conflicts would then be the result of the community's successful intervention.

History is sometimes likened to a river whose mass of water, which naturally tends to spread in all directions and thus destroy its unity, is contained by its bed. The Community would thus constitute the necessary framework within which conflicts would be powerless against it, and its effective intervention would be purely passive. This comparison is inaccurate: nowhere do we find the supposed fixed 'bed' of social evolution. The river is contained by its external environment, whereas the Community, on the contrary, is subjected to pressure from geographically neighbouring Communities that tend to break it apart. The social current does indeed have a bed that safeguards its unity and, therefore, its existence, but it is neither fixed nor external to it. It is part of its duration. It participates in the *poly-alectic* movement through its ceaseless activity amidst the multiple antagonisms that it guides and overcomes. Nor is it inanimate, nor does it act as an autonomous factor imposed from outside upon the contradictions. The unifying force manifests itself at every moment of its duration and within the very heart of each of the social entities that make up the Community.

If the struggle for existence, understood as a constant rivalry between each individual and all others, is to be regarded as an essential factor in social evolution, we must not set it against another factor, but rather add to it a far more important one: solidarity for existence. More important, in fact, since the individual himself, a product of the family group, is by his very origin a social being, and since the groups of which he forms part are continuous victories of the spirit of unity over the spirit of struggle; and more important in absolute terms, since everything that civilisation has produced stems from the spatial and temporal solidarity of successive generations, and since every personal endeavour is made with society or against it, but always in relation to it. In short, and above all, in the Community as in each of its constituent social groups, the struggle for life is evidently less powerful than solidarity, since it fails to break the unitary continuity that prevails over it. Moreover: social solidarity makes the struggle more effective, lending a communal strength and value to the fight.

132. The rhythm of social life.

The communal impulse that transcends the individual is, therefore, found within the individual himself. It is the individual who bears within himself the instinct for solidarity just as much as the instinct for struggle. He accepts society, in principle, as a necessary reality whose influence he feels within his own self. But social dynamism, the synthesis of all the individual and collective forces of the Community, on the one hand stands in opposition to a certain extent to the individual's self-interested fulfilment and, on the other, does not correspond exactly to his conception of solidarity, that is to say to his personal communal intention, which plays only a negligible part in the interplay of forces that transcends social dynamics. Hence, the individual is torn between his permanent social interest and his particular interest of the moment in the medi-

in that it does not correspond to the Community's guiding principle and runs counter to it. -

We thus observe, in every human being, the existence of a personal social rhythm created by the alternating predominance of their two fundamental tendencies. Moreover: a multiplicity of rhythms, one corresponding to the communal duration and the others to the respective durations of the intermediate groups and communities of which the individual in question forms part, and whose totality constitutes the data of what we call man's attitude towards society.

On the other hand, each social group manages its internal contradictions with varying degrees of success, depending on the shifting balance between the tendencies corresponding, respectively, to the spirit of solidarity and the spirit of struggle. The group thus evolves at a pace determined by the succession of movements towards its purely theoretical perfect unity and towards its disassociation, which is never achieved except at the moment of its disappearance. The same applies to intermediate communities, which endure by virtue of successive affirmations of varying intensity.

It is natural, then, that the Community, whose evolution is the product of the synthesis of the individual and collective durations unfolding within it, should also follow a rhythm whose movements correspond to the more or less successful realisation of its historical intention, that is to say, of its unity in time. The social body concentrates on the affirmation of its being and then relaxes into a crisis which it overcomes through a new effort of collective will. Let us point out here a widespread error of language: one often speaks of 'social tension' when the constituent elements of a Community are violently opposed. In reality, such tension does not pertain to the Community, which, on the contrary, loses some of its unity and power and thus relaxes, but to individuals and social groups who momentarily forget their necessary solidarity.

133. The result of social evolution.

In the previous section, we have considered only the organic aspect of social duration. We shall see later (Paragraph 135) that synthesis does not occur spontaneously but depends on the effectiveness of the governing body of the group in question. And we shall also see (see Chapter XIII) that the qualitative demographic factor – which is variable – has a powerful influence on the evolution of groups and communities. To the organic rhythm of the social body are thus added a political rhythm and a qualitative rhythm. Social duration is the communal result of these three rhythms or, more precisely, of the first two, since the third acts almost exclusively by 'colouring' individual and collective durations and is thus naturally integrated into the organic and political rhythms, in the formation of which it plays a part.

To define social duration, we must consider the amplitude and period of the oscillations into which its rhythm is broken down, that is to say, the variation and speed of succession of its movements. But we must also determine its stage of development by comparison with other communities and, above all, the outcome of its successive changes. The community's rhythm can be figuratively expressed as a sinusoidal curve. But only exceptionally does this curve remain horizontal. If we plot its trajectory, we find that, generally speaking, the evolutionary dynamism 'rises' or 'falls'. It is then said that the community is progressing or in decline. Let us also note, to complete our analysis, that the rhythm of social duration is essentially complex, not only in terms of its components but also in its movement. If we consider, in fact, a community that has disappeared, we can schematically represent its duration in the form of a parabolic curve consisting of two periods, one ascending and the other descending. But if we examine one of these periods, we observe a shorter undulating movement whose resultant determines the orientation of the curve over the period in question. We could reduce our scale of observation further and further without ever finding a rectilinear movement, save for our own inability to analyse. The succession of movements of unitary tension and disintegrating relaxation is constant.

134. Affirmation and renunciation.

The rhythm of social evolution thus consists of a constant, though more or less successful, overcoming of internal conflicts with a view to projecting communal harmony. It is in this 'more' and this 'less' that we must seek the causes of its contradictory tendencies and the general direction of its movement. The Community is either affirmed or abandoned. The upward curve of its duration corresponds to its unified victory over the complexities and divergences of individuals, groups and intermediate communities, and this victory manifests itself in a strengthening of the functional efficacy of the social body, that is to say, of its vitality. The downward curve, on the contrary, expresses an increasingly less successful overcoming of internal antagonisms, that is, the defeat of the Community.

Focused on a positive drive towards self-realisation, every social group seeks and achieves an increase in its power. Whilst it is false to claim that it can only assert itself through opposition, it must be acknowledged—which amounts to the same thing—that *the* development of its vital energy leads to an expansion of forces that transcend its previous limits and, for that very reason, exert pressure on the positions held by neighbouring communities. Power, moreover, is nothing but a set of possibilities, and one of the means – the easiest – of realising and exercising that power consists in seeking confrontation with everything that opposes its conquering energy. The struggle for power is, therefore, nothing other than the struggle for life stripped of the short-sighted utilitarianism to which Darwin's disciples sought to reduce it.

The collective will to power constitutes an essential trend in the upward trajectory of social development. We have seen that it is neither the only nor the prevailing trend, and that solidarity determines the course of evolution. But this holds true only for those social bodies whose very existence constitutes a permanent victory over the spirit of conflict. The Community, whose power stems from the solidarity of its constituent elements, asserts itself autonomously and clashes with other Communities with which it shares no common interest. Internal solidarity thus becomes power, and this power provokes or fuels external rivalries. Imperialism, whether manifested in the peaceful form of the agricultural conquest of virgin lands or in the violent form of colonisation and war, is the normal expression of the power of a Community that asserts itself and progresses. Conversely, the curve of historical duration indicates a downward spiral when the social body renounces the values and assets of its heritage and abandons itself to the pleasures of the moment, lacking drive, energy and will—let alone the will not merely to resist but to conquer. Its disappearance is then merely a matter of time.

135. The State, an organ of synthesis.

In summary: communal unity and, consequently, the tendency towards social continuity are the result of the synthesis of the various constituent social forces, a synthesis that is constantly evolving as it is ceaselessly redefined by the very evolution of individuals, social groups and intermediate communities. Such a process is by no means mechanical. Social synthesis is not necessary, in the philosophical sense of the word, and history provides us with numerous examples of communities that disintegrated and disappeared through anarchic upheaval. The social instinct, in fact, is all the more effective insofar as the demand for solidarity it represents manifests itself within a more limited and immediate circle. In other words, the interests of basic groups and the federations that encompass them at a secondary level take precedence in the mind of the social being over those of a distant community whose usefulness only appears to them sporadically, whilst the burdens arising from it constitute a daily concern.

The unified resolution of internal antagonisms cannot, therefore, be achieved through a spontaneous movement. It is the result of a process of domination whereby synergistic solidarity is imposed on individuals, groups and federations at the community level, and this process requires a specialised body: the State. This is very different, therefore, from the conciliator portrayed by some theorists: it is not limited to softening the clashes between antagonistic forces, nor to acting as a supreme judge in conflicts that might undermine the pre-established unity. It is not, in fact, a matter of achieving a balance that would amount to nothing more than stagnation. The Community must progress over time; that is to say, it must increasingly assert itself through a momentum that is, by definition, positive.

That is why the State takes control of the opposing forces and brings them into harmony, transcending their contradictions. As we have already seen (Note 129), this compromise obli-

It would lead groups and intermediate communities to abandon some of their demands for the sake of social peace, and subsequently to relinquish some of their power. Synthesis, on the other hand, allows each of them to achieve full realisation by compelling them to adapt rather than to abdicate. The old image of the 'chariot of the State' takes on its full meaning here: the horses only achieve their full effectiveness because the charioteer compels them to form a harmonious team rather than fighting amongst themselves or going their separate ways. We can also compare the collective body to an orchestra conductor: the State creates – through the synthesis of diverse elements which, left to their own devices, would each play their part whilst trying to dominate the others – a unified and harmonious 'social melody'. It uses 'instrumental' contradictions to forge an essentially fluid order, an order that would have no meaning or even existence were it not ever-changing: a *poly-dialectical* order.

The synthesis of forces, therefore, is communal, but it is achieved only to the extent that the State, as a specialised autonomous group, possesses the capacity, the power and the will to perform its functions in its capacity as the agent of the historical purpose it embodies. Yet the State is one of the constituent groups of a whole that cannot exist without it. It would therefore be mistaken to believe that it transcends the Community. It is the Community that overcomes its internal antagonisms through the work of the State. The State, in fact, enjoys no supremacy over the social body. It is merely the servant of the collective of which it forms part and to which it is subject. It is at its service. The functions it performs do not belong to it in its own right, even though it is their sole qualified holder, but by delegation of power. This does not mean, quite the contrary, that it is the instrument of the federated groups, nor that it depends on their majority or even unanimous will. For the Community is not reduced to the sum of its constituent parts, all the more so if one excludes that which, by virtue of its specialisation, plays a primary role.

Let us confine ourselves to these brief remarks regarding the nature and function of the Community's governing body. Its study does not fall within the field of sociology but rather that of political science. [9] Yet we could not fail to address it briefly here, lest the process of social evolution become incomprehensible.

XIII THE DATA OF SOCIAL EVOLUTION

136. Race: its potential.

The social evolution that we analysed schematically in the previous chapter has no independent existence. It is nothing more than the same temporal process of

9)- Cf.: Mahieu, Jaime María de, El Estado comunitario, Ed. Arayú, Buenos Aires, 1962.

a human collective. If we have been able to speak of it in abstract terms, it is merely because all human beings possess, by nature, the same basic social instinct and the same fundamental requirements for coexistence. But the social whole does not conform to external norms of duration; rather, it creates its own evolution according to its nature, insofar as this is common to all collective human entities but also insofar as it possesses distinctive characteristics. This is the reason why historical analysis shows us so clearly that each Community develops at a unique pace.

This rhythm stems, therefore, from the evolving social whole and, first and foremost, from its potentialities. These may or may not be realised depending on the circumstances, but obviously those that do not exist will never be realised. In every decision, the Community chooses, rightly or wrongly, from among the various possibilities presented to it, the one that allows it to fulfil itself best, but it cannot choose an impossibility without risking failure. Thus, to reach the other side of a pond, a duck can walk or swim. But a hen necessarily chooses the former because it lacks the essential potential to cross the water.

Now then: the biopsychic characteristics that determine the potential of a human group are determined by its hereditary endowment, which depends, directly or indirectly, on race: directly in the case of capacities for being and acting, and indirectly in the case of capacities for acquiring (see paragraph 138). This means that every Community develops within the framework defined by the race of its population. But we already know (see Paragraph 92) that the hereditary endowment of a human group is defined not only by the potential characteristics it possesses but also by its degree of homogeneity, that is to say, by the frequency with which those characteristics appear in individuals. The theoretically possible choices depend on the characteristics themselves; the capacity for decision-making depends on the degree of homogeneity.

Given that ethnic groups are unequal (see paragraph 95)—always from the point of view of hereditary endowment and often in terms of their degree of homogeneity—the racial factors influencing social evolution are of two kinds. It is not enough for a community to have within its ranks individuals and lineages of high creative capacity for the slope of its rhythmic curve (see paragraph 132) to be upward. There must also be an internal convergence of forces that enables the whole to assert itself at the level of its highest values. The realisation of a perfect synthesis depends, in fact, on such convergence. If creators have to squander their potential on unresolved conflicts, or if they simply do not receive the collective support that only a unity of communal aspiration can provide, they are rendered ineffective from the point of view of their social action, whether or not they succeed in realising themselves as individuals. A social group that is monolithic due to its high degree of racial homogeneity will achieve greater affirmation than a community endowed with a richer, more abundant and higher-quality genetic heritage,

effectively, but lacking that unified dynamism which depends, in part, on the balanced distribution of its basic characteristics.

137. The breed: its dynamism.

When the individuals who make up the 'raw material' of a social group differ from one another not only in terms of their qualitative level and the secondary characteristics that define their necessary specialisation, but also in terms of their fundamental tendencies, the lack of affinity between them makes it difficult for them to coexist harmoniously. They do not understand one another and each goes their own way. The unifying synthesis of their antagonisms demands an extraordinary effort, with the consequent drain on energy. We are not referring here to the polyethnic community – in which racial groups, juxtaposed in homogeneous territorial units or organically combined (see Paragraph 96), pose problems of a particular nature – but to the community whose mixed-race population, or one in an advanced stage of miscegenation, lacks the desirable racial homogeneity. It is not a question of two or more groups, well or poorly unified, but of a single one, divided within itself and torn by divergent tendencies, which resists unification because it lacks essential unity.

Evolutionary dynamism, however, does not depend exclusively or primarily on the greater or lesser ease of communal synthesis. It stems above all from the internal forces of the social body itself, and these vary from one race to another. For the hereditary endowment of a group encompasses not only characteristics but also the energy with which those characteristics tend to manifest and project themselves. Like individuals, races differ in their capacity and willingness to assert what they are. Some are active, and some are passive. The former are not necessarily the most refined, nor even the most inventive, but their drive enables them to prevail over the latter, even when the latter are better endowed in terms of variety and nuances of character.

Furthermore, it is from this racial energy that the Community derives the choices it makes from among the possibilities which, at every 'moment' of its evolution, history offers it in order to resolve the problems it faces. The potentialities that form part of the hereditary endowment are not automatically realised when external circumstances demand it. On the one hand, they can only do so when the degree of development attained provides a latent character with the possibility of manifesting itself in events: like the individual, the race realises itself over time. On the other hand, the vital energy of the ethnic group, which often brings the available potential to the fore and, whenever this potential is realised, provides the dynamism for its assertion, varies with the unfolding of historical duration. It is when its defining characteristics pass from potential to actuality with the highest degree of energy that a people reaches the zenith of its evolutionary curve.

138. Race: its capacity for adaptation.

Among the potentialities of any racial endowment, one deserves special mention due to its unique nature and the impact it has on all aspects of social life: the capacity for adaptation. It is upon this that the changes through which the Community responds to its internal variations and to alterations in the external environment in which it operates depend.

Regardless of the historical circumstances and the level of development that make change more or less difficult, there is no doubt that there are rigid races and flexible races. The former tend to preserve the structures, customs and ways of thinking which, throughout their history, have satisfactorily expressed their essence, even when these no longer meet present-day needs. The latter spontaneously adopt the successive forms that facilitate their affirmation. If we set aside the pathological cases that arise when a stagnant social group prefers extinction to necessary change, or, conversely, when, being inconsistent, it renounces its personality in favour of dispensable imitation, the two attitudes are mutually implied. No people can remain true to themselves without adapting to some extent to changing circumstances. Any process of adaptation is meaningless if it does not aim at the preservation of what is essential. But rigid peoples resist necessary changes as much as they can, whilst flexible peoples are always ready to adapt to the demands of the moment. The former, therefore, always evolve with a lag that places or keeps them in a position of inferiority. In order to remain true to themselves even in details of little importance, they undermine the very affirmation of their deepest nature. And when they finally have to relinquish an untenable position, they adapt with the same rigidity with which they resisted change, and a modification that might have been temporary becomes immutable. Flexible races, on the other hand, are better able to distinguish the essential from the secondary or superficial, and readily adopt new attitudes that allow them to remain true to themselves.

The capacity for adaptation is, therefore, a fundamental trait that forms part of the breed's genetic endowment. It is not a matter of passive malleability, but rather of the disposition upon which the acquisition of new traits or new modes of expression of already developed traits depends. Hence there are two distinct types of rigid breeds: those that lack the potential whose realisation would be necessary for their better development, and those which, whilst possessing it, are unable to put it into practice at the right moment. The former do not adapt because they lack the means to do so; the latter, because they lack the necessary flexibility to do so quickly and to the appropriate extent. Thus, flies forced to live amongst flowers will not adapt to their new dietary conditions and will not produce honey because they lack the essential technical potential, whilst bees subjected to an environmental change

They will change the way they work, but at a damagingly slow pace and with a means of subsistence that is barely sufficient—and not always—to keep them afloat.

139. The size of the population.

To the potential and dynamism of the race must logically be added, as a factor in social evolution, the population size of the community in question. It is obvious that the balance of power between opposing human groups depends in part on the number of members in each, although the influence of this quantitative factor in this field tends to diminish with technical progress. Yet historical analysis shows us that, even setting aside this highly significant aspect of the problem, population size in itself determines development. A social group of a superior race but with a very small population – a patriarchal family, for example, or an isolated village – stagnates due to a lack of internal diversity. The small number of its members effectively prevents the division of labour, through which each individual would give their best by fully realising their potential. Thus, a small community inevitably remains in a state of static mediocrity, and a large community divided into small, isolated communities finds itself in the same situation.

It is therefore demographic concentration, rather than population size itself, that influences social duration. By enabling the greatest possible division of labour – in the broadest sense of the term, which is neither exclusively nor fundamentally economic – and by multiplying superstructural exchanges, the city constitutes the most favourable environment for creativity in all fields and, consequently, for evolution. Provided, however, that the concentration of an excessive number of inhabitants does not trigger a disintegrating process of overcrowding. For each level of civilisation, there is an optimal degree of concentration that history clearly indicates and which is defined, in each case, by the maximum division of labour compatible with social cohesion. The city or cities situated at this level are those that constitute the centre or centres of development and draw in the dispersed population. Let us note here that demographic concentration is influenced by population size but does not necessarily depend on it: the phenomenon of macrocephaly – a large capital in a sparsely populated country – demonstrates this. We should also note that optimal population density (see Paragraph 81) is not always a factor in the Community's greater affirmation, as an excess of population can become both a cause and an instrument of its conquering projection beyond the limits of its territory.

The data from the age pyramid finally enable us to supplement the analysis in this section. The passive population – children and the elderly – obviously hinders development. In the immediate term, the community with the highest proportion of productive adults is the one with the greatest chance of success. But the social group with the highest proportion of children is the one with the greatest potential for future achievement. Hence, we can speak of the age of a population – young or

old – and of the trend – rejuvenation or ageing – that it exhibits in this regard.

140. The qualitative composition of the population.

Just as age stratification affects population size, qualitative stratification influences the impact of race on social development. When we speak of ethnic homogeneity (see Note 92), we are in fact referring to the distribution of hereditary traits and not to the extent to which they are expressed. We saw earlier (Paragraph 103), on the contrary, that the population of a racially homogeneous group is distributed across complementary strata of aptitude, which vary according to various factors. Race is the most important of these, but not the only one: observation and historical analysis provide us with countless comparative data on communities of the same race with different qualitative stratifications and on the changes that occur in this regard, over time, within the same community.

A social group which, either because it lacks the necessary potential or because it fails to develop the potential it does possess, has no *creators* within its ranks can evolve only in a routine manner and, at best, through imitation. It therefore not only lacks the capacity for invention that would enable it to progress, but also finds itself hampered in its process of adapting to itself and to the external environment, as it is unable to find satisfactory responses to unusual circumstances. A social group composed exclusively of *assimilators* inevitably stagnates, at the mercy of external contributions, without which it could not move forward.

Let us not believe, however, that the upward or downward trajectory of a community's historical development depends, in this regard, solely on the proportion of individuals belonging to the upper strata. An ethnic group composed primarily of *creators and innovators* can only develop through migratory complementarity. Such was the case with the Achaean cities of Ancient Greece, particularly Athens, which had to 'import' slaves of other racial origins to provide the labour essential for the original population to realise its full potential at the higher level at which it stood. But the counterpart to such a contribution, demanded by an overly generalised superiority, was 'ethnic chaos', to use Chamberlain's apt expression [10], and decline (see Paragraph 223). The Jewish *diaspora* has resolved a problem of the same nature, though very different in terms of its specific circumstances, in a different way. Composed primarily of *achievers and,* on the other hand, lacking a territory of its own, the

[10]) Chamberlain, Houston Stewart: *The Genesis of the Nineteenth Century*, French edition, Librairie Payot et Cie, Paris, 1913.

The Jewish people have become a parasite on the communities in which they have settled, exploiting non-Jewish *creators and assimilators*.

The optimal numerical ratio between the three positive strata of the qualitative scale – we already know that the fourth constitutes a mere social burden – varies with the level of civilisation and, which is not quite the same thing, with the degree of technological advancement. Let us limit ourselves to giving one example: in the field of production, the pre-capitalist world required more *creators* – all craftsmen had to be such – than contemporary industrial society; but the latter demands a much higher proportion of *implementers:* technicians. Had it been founded in the 13th or 18th century, Israel would have ranked, in relation to the nations of Western Europe, at a much lower level than it occupies today.

141. The geographical environment.

Whatever its race and population size, every human group develops within a specific territory, which shapes its evolution. The environment, in effect, acts upon the group as an agent that actualises and selects its immanent possibilities. The ethnic group finds itself, in relation to this environment, in a situation similar to that of a chess player facing the board. The player possesses a capacity – that is to say, virtual possibilities of playing in one way or another – which is given at the start of the game and stems from their biophysical endowments and experience. But his actual play depends not only on these abilities but also on the respective positions of his opponent's pieces and his own at any given moment. Such an 'environment' influences his decision to move a particular piece in a particular direction when many other combinations are theoretically possible.

Let us replace 'board' with 'geographical conditions', in the broadest sense of the word, and 'player' with 'ethnic group', and we shall have defined the influence of the environment on race. No one is unaware, for example, that the sea inspires boldness in the white man; the mountains, resilience; and the tropical climate, apathy. But the black man of the African coast has never become a seafarer; he cannot withstand heights, and a warm climate is essential for his relative energy. A race, therefore, is capable of adapting to a certain range of conditions presented by the environment and, in adapting, changes in accordance with that environment, but always within the limits of its hereditary endowment.

When considering an ethnic group within a given environment, one observes a dual process of differentiation and unification within the community it constitutes. Differentiation from other groups of the same race, which are necessarily subject to different conditions of development. In some racially homogeneous regions, despite the mixing brought about by the expansion of transport networks, one still observes today differences—which we must indeed call ethnic—from village to village: the soil and, consequently, part of the food consumed are not absolutely identical, nor are these 'terrestrial forces' whose effects are evident even though we do not yet know to what

match exactly. If, at the other extreme, we consider two groups of the same origin, one situated in the frozen lands of the far north and the other on the equator, the environment will exert such a powerful influence in opposite directions that, over time, one may sometimes get the impression of being faced with communities with little ethnic kinship.

It should be noted that in practice, and even when considering historical periods, it is often impossible to know with certainty what proportion of racial differentiation is due to interbreeding and what proportion to the environment. On the other hand, it is easier to recognise the phenomenon of the unification of a heterogeneous group through the influence of the environment. All European nations today are the product of recent intermingling, and their endogamous homogeneity is still far from perfect. Nevertheless, shared living conditions have given rise to national characteristics that allow one to recognise at a glance a group of a hundred Italians or a hundred English people. The same occurs within small communities living on the same land but subject to different living conditions in one respect or another: in a given city, one can distinguish, without much difficulty—at least in countries where social stratification is not very recent—a worker from a bourgeois.

We must be careful, however, not to fall into the common trap of equating race with environment. The influence of the latter factor has been greatly exaggerated, often for reasons that were in no way scientific. No environmental influence can erase, or even diminish, the differences between the major races or between the principal races within them, just as simple changes in climate, diet and training are incapable of transforming a Shetland pony into a Percheron. But we also know that the characteristics acquired in the course of their evolution by the various ethnic groups have a range of variation that is subject to the environment. A tropical climate will not turn a lineage of white people black, but it will reduce their dynamism and their capacity for innovation. It is a fact that the geographical environment, an effective agent of differentiation, unification and progress – or decline – of ethnic groups, only acts decisively within the framework of existing races.

142. The social environment.

The living conditions imposed by geography are not the only factors that exert pressure on the community. Barring the exceptional case—which could only be found in a society at a very low level of civilisation, one that had developed without any external contact—every social group must also adapt to the human environment surrounding it, and it does so through the very same selective process we have analysed in the previous section. This applies, of course, to the internal elements of the social body as well. It takes only two or three generations to transform a line of peasants into proletarians, both physically and psychologically.

However, in addition to the consequences of adaptation, there are external influences—as regards the influence of the social environment—that enable the community

to benefit from the fruits of others' efforts. We are not referring here to the fact that every social group, being composed of human beings, is endowed with memory and can therefore transmit its superstructural acquisitions from generation to generation. This is a point we shall consider in the chapter
XVI. We are referring simply to exchanges of every kind that have always existed but which have increased so much over the last hundred years that they have come to form, in effect, a common pool with all the knowledge acquired by humanity across its various fields of development. Thus Japan was able, in the space of a few decades, to move from a craft-based economy resembling that of medieval Europe to the level of a major industrial power: at that time, it confined itself to imitating the Europeans, absorbing their science and technology. It is clear that it could only do so by virtue of the exceptional talents of its race. The Black people of Africa had the same theoretical opportunity but have failed to take advantage of it.

At first glance, it would seem that the transfer of superstructural elements, facilitated by increased trade, acts as a factor in the levelling of societies. It does, in fact, mitigate the differences in status that separate communities of the same ethnic potential but with different qualitative stratification. Lacking *creators* of its own, Switzerland nevertheless appears to stand on an equal footing with Germany, Italy and France because it receives and assimilates what is created by its neighbours, who are better endowed in qualitative terms, whereas, left to its own devices, it would probably never have emerged from an agrarian-pastoral state.

The situation is fundamentally different when we consider a people lacking not only in creative power but also in the capacity for assimilation. In isolation, such a social group could, in effect, go its own way, realising its full potential at the level determined by its nature. It was primitive, if you will, but authentic. It cannot refuse the external influences reaching it today, if only because they satisfy some of the material aspirations of its members. The 'savage' dresses up as a white man and becomes a caricature of one. Perhaps, at best, he acquires certain appearances of civilisation. But he destroys his own being. Far from diminishing, the previous inequality is, regrettably, increasing.

143. The creative hero.

Every human community thus realises its own being in accordance with the geo-social environment that shapes it. This does not mean that it develops in a monolithic manner, nor that its realisation is automatic. We have already seen (Paragraph 140) the importance of the qualitative composition of the population in social evolution. Without *creators*, the Community can only adapt through imitation, in an inauthentic manner. But not all *creators,* if there are any, act at the same level or with the same effectiveness. Among them stands out the hero, the exceptional protagonist of history, who intervenes decisively in the course of events.

Whether a doctrinaire, a statesman, a leader of the people or a warlord, the hero embodies the historical purpose of the Community, interpreting and projecting it, marked by his own genius. He cannot, of course, act arbitrarily, for history imposes upon him facts derived from the past which he cannot alter. Yet he does not merely go with the flow of social evolution: he seizes hold of it and shapes it. Without him, social evolution would be different from what it is, for better or for worse. Needless to say, recognising the hero's intervention in history in no way implies denying the causal chain of events but, on the contrary, confirms the influence of the human factor, including through the actions of exceptional figures.

The hero is therefore, first and foremost, a creator of the highest order who provides the community with new elements that are useful for its affirmation—that is to say, for its upward development; or else—and this is the case with a 'satanic' hero—who drags it at a rapid pace towards its demise. It is not enough, then, to have brilliant and novel ideas in order to become a factor in social evolution. These ideas must respond to a historical need – whether justified or not –, provide a solution – whether satisfactory or not – to a problem posed, and gain sufficient acceptance so that they do not remain confined, ineffective, within an esoteric circle. What is characteristic of the hero is precisely to create powerfully within the historical current. This does not mean, far from it, that he confines himself to merely following or even accelerating the process of social evolution as it stands at the moment of his intervention. On the contrary, he stirs within it a force hitherto non-existent or dormant that alters its direction. But he cannot do so unless he acts within present reality, that is, outside of any utopia.

A contemplative or a detached intellectual may be an extraordinary creator: but never a hero in the sense in which the word is used here. If Maurras had written *The *Survey on the Monarchy** in the 13th century, or Fichte **Addresses to the German Nation** in the 16th century, they would not have made their mark on history as they did by providing answers to problems that demanded a solution.

'Heroic' creation is thus characterised by an opportunity that transforms its outcome into the stimulus needed for the community to set its sights on a new goal and adapt its structural forms accordingly. The hero, as a creator, is the catalyst for a profound change that would not have occurred without him, or at the very least would have been different from what it is.

144. The charismatic hero.

The intellectual creation to which we have just referred concerns ideas and therefore has a deferred impact. More immediate, and therefore more spectacular, is the action of the charismatic hero who takes and imposes the decisions on which the course of historical evolution depends. The popular leader, dis-

Whether or not he holds an official position within the community, he inspires masses who regard him as the embodiment of their own aspirations and follow him with the greatest enthusiasm and without the slightest hesitation. The role of the leading hero is, therefore, twofold. On the one hand, he chooses the path; on the other, he leads the members of the community—or one of its factions—along that path.

We already know (see Paragraph 136) that social evolution unfolds through a succession of choices between the possibilities available at any given moment, which entails a succession of decisions taken on the basis of a comparison between the available forces and the conditions of the process. Each decision results from an analysis of the facts of the problem and, therefore, constitutes a genuine intellectual creation on the part of the person or persons responsible for leadership, whether within or outside the State. But such a creation would have no social value whatsoever if it did not become a reality.

The charismatic hero decides and acts, persuading the masses to accept measures whose purpose they are unable to grasp. It is enough for him to speak out for popular enthusiasm to back his decision, whatever it may be. But such dominance of the mythical hero does not arise from his wisdom, nor even from his successes, but from the skill with which he knows how to interpret, embody and stir up the great emotional forces of the moment. From this point of view, the hero is a demagogue, in the etymological sense of the word and often also in its colloquial sense. But his demagoguery is nothing more than a means of leading the Community, or this or that faction thereof, towards a coldly defined goal, bearing no essential relation to the psychic forces exploited and, at times, in complete contradiction to them. Thus Peter the Hermit extolled the faith of Christendom to lead the great feudal lords to the Holy Land and thereby relieve the pressure the papacy was suffering at their hands, just as Joan of Arc would later do to liberate France from English occupation. Thus Perón proclaimed himself the executor of the proletarian will to incorporate the working class into the ranks of the national forces and make Argentina the leader of Latin America.

Through these resources, which only he can utilise, the charismatic hero manages to stir up a movement of intense excitement amongst the masses, causing the community—or one of its factions—to give its very best and overcome all its internal contradictions in a violent and irrational outburst of unity. He thus constitutes a fundamental factor in major historical changes.

XIV. STRUCTURAL CHANGES AND SOCIAL MOBILITY

145. Stable society and mobile society.

The dynamic factors of social evolution, which we analysed in the previous chapter, ultimately boil down to the population of the Community in question. But we already know (see Chapter 111) that the individuals who constitute the 'raw material' of any social group are not simply juxtaposed but, on the contrary, linked to one another by structural relationships. And we also know (see ibid.) that, even setting aside the pathological transformations which we shall discuss in Book Four, these relationships are in part unchangeable owing to the very nature of social man and in part subject to change according to circumstances, that is to say, over time. However, observation and historical analysis show us that structural changes do not occur with the same scope or at the same speed in all communities or in all eras.

There are social groups which, however far back we trace their history, always appear to us with the same structures. This is the case with countless primitive – or degenerate – tribes, but also with European villages which, despite industrialisation and individualistic legislation, still retain today the same morphological features they had six hundred years ago. Sometimes structural stability results from isolation and the permanence of evolutionary factors. If the race, population size and geosocial environment of a human group devoid of *innovators* and without any contact with the rest of the world remain unchanged, there is no reason for new forms of organisation to emerge. But in other cases, even when demographic factors and the geographical environment remain unchanged, the social environment exerting pressure on the community in question seems to demand and encourage a transformation which, nevertheless, does not occur. Hence, structural stability may stem from the immutability of evolutionary factors or from a successful resistance which, from a qualitative point of view, we shall call traditionalism or stagnation, depending on the judgement we make regarding the value of the possible and rejected change. What we say of a community applies equally to an era that has achieved such internal and external equilibrium that any change would prove detrimental – for example, the Middle Ages in Western Europe – or, conversely, to another that is transforming at a rapid pace, as has been the case for the past two hundred years.

Apart from cases of isolation, morphological immutability is exceptional. Generally speaking, every community tends to create or imitate forms that enable it to respond to the changes taking place in the course of its evolution. Even so, we observe a greater or lesser propensity to accept demands or suggestions for structural transformation. There are social groups that change as little as possible, and there are those that seem to seek change for change's sake, without the slightest need to do so. Whatever the degree, structural mobility

This stems, evidently, from a morphological flexibility which favours, on the one hand, the more or less rapid and profound modification of the historical and contingent constitutive relationships (see paragraphs 32 and 33) of the community and, on the other, the movement of individuals and social groups between strata. Excessive rigidity and amorphism – two pathological cases – constitute the limits within which all possible combinations of conservation and transformation are situated. To add that the most favourable degree of mobility for any community is that which allows all useful changes and hinders any counterproductive change would be nothing more than a truism.

146. Cyclical structural changes.

However, even in the most socially rigid societies, structural changes occur that are inevitable because they stem from human nature itself. The individuals who make up groups and communities are not mere schemas, nor do they remain within the same quantitative framework. They are born, develop and die. And population size varies, within a given territory, depending on various factors (see Chapter VIII). Age and numbers naturally influence social organisation.

Let us consider the biosocial groups that constitute a community of rigid structures from this perspective. Each of these is formed on the basis of a preceding group, the couple, which becomes a conjugal family upon the birth of a child. For a number of years, which varies with the level of civilisation, their fundamental structures remain the same, although they change qualitatively as their members grow older. There comes a time when the child becomes independent and the family reverts to a couple, eventually becoming a mere cohabiting group and disappearing with the death of one of its members. Meanwhile, the child joins with another individual of the opposite sex to form a couple, and the cycle repeats itself, essentially identical to the one we have just analysed. On the one hand, then, the family always has the same essential structure, but this forms part of an internal evolutionary process that constitutes the very existence of the group. On the other hand, the Community is always made up of families of the same structural composition, but not of the same families, since biosocial groups succeed one another in accordance with their natural biological rhythm.

To these variations in development must be added those arising from the number of family members. Whether there is one child or twelve, the fundamental relationships that constitute the group do not change in terms of their nature, but they do vary in terms of their quantitative and qualitative expression. And secondary relationships, which have a powerful impact on the life of the group as a whole and on all its members, depend on the number of children.

What we have just said regarding the family applies, *mutatis mutandis,* to other social groups and various communities. A company, a local authority—

A parish, a diocese or a community of any kind also undergoes a process of transformation from its inception to its dissolution, although its essential structures remain the same for as long as it exists. Its constituent elements – individual and/or collective – come and go within it and vary in number. The Renault car factory, which began at the end of the 19th century with two people – its founder and an apprentice – employed 35,000 workers on the eve of the Second World War. The change was certainly considerable between the workshop and the 'combinat', even though the relationships of complementarity and hierarchy that define the socio-economic group remained unchanged. And Rome changed enormously as it evolved from the village of kings to the empire of the Caesars, although the pyramidal structure that characterises the Community endured throughout its history.

147. Evolutionary structural changes.

As we already know (see paragraphs 32 and 33), in addition to the necessary changes in natural structures, there are the historical and occasional modifications brought about by social evolution without affecting the essence of basic social forms. In some cases, these are secondary structures that refine the fundamental ones in a given situation; in others, they are new and temporary structures that arise to meet incidental demands. Such is the case with the transition from polygamy to monogamy in traditionally warlike but now pacified peoples, and the establishment of auxiliary hospitals during epidemics. The significance of such changes becomes clear when we compare the socio-economic structures born of mechanisation – even setting aside their pathological aspects – with those that previously responded to the needs of production, or when we consider the incidental structures demanded by the 'total wars' of our century.

Whether historical or temporary in nature, these changes always stem from the same need within society, which, faced with new circumstances in its evolution, must adapt to its changing geosocial environment or reshape it by acting upon it. In both cases, it requires suitable tools, which may arise from the transformation of existing structures or the creation of new forms. The morphological demands of adaptation therefore vary with the degree of mobility of the era and with the relations of the group in question with its neighbours. For a medieval municipality, any structural change would have been counterproductive, and a Chavante tribe may, well into the 20th century, retain social forms dating back to the Neolithic, whilst no civilised social group could have survived over the last two centuries had it not transformed itself to some extent.

The process of adaptation to which we refer does not, of course, imply a mere acceptance of the environment and its constraints. Whether weak or simply passive in nature, the social group is shaped within its framework; whether strong and creative, it devises new ways of modifying the conditions of its development, with a view to its full realisation. Conversely, every internal creation alters the relationship

between the whole and its environment and thus triggers a process of adaptation.

From this perspective, then, in times of social mobility, social evolution is the result of the morphological interactions between groups of people in contact with one another; these groups react actively or passively depending on their nature, but they must always modify their structures to some extent in order to do so. In times of stability, by contrast, creation – if it occurs at all, and whatever its intensity and value – takes place within traditional structures and in accordance with them. The dynamic interactions between social groups do not call into question forms that are the same for everyone. Changes are limited by the common acceptance of a morphological order that is satisfactory to all groups and communities in contact, and even in conflict.

148. The structural revolution.

Generally speaking, adaptive structural changes take place gradually. However, one sometimes observes, in one or more communities, a violent morphological upheaval, with a chain reaction of transformations that, within a short period of time, affect a significant portion of the historical structures. Such a movement may be of a pathological nature, in which case one speaks of subversion; or, conversely, it may seek to restore the social order that had previously been undermined, which constitutes a revolution. Far from being a cause of disruption, the process marks, in the latter case, the end of a crisis that it has resolved. Through a transformation analogous to a certain extent to biological mutation—the factors of which must be sought in the anarchy or imbalance of the forces at play—it adapts the structures of existing society to its own conditions of development. In other words, it cannot under any circumstances be regarded either as a chance occurrence or as the result of the plain and simple will to power of an individual or a group.

Revolution is brought about by a certain balance of power and institutions. It is triggered by the crisis arising from an unbearable social situation. Through it, the Community rediscovers its harmony and its fidelity to itself through a sudden acceptance of its very being, hitherto poorly understood. It chooses between life and death, between survival and collapse. It is not free to refuse the new conditions of its continued existence. It may hesitate, feel its way, make mistakes; it is not permitted to make a good or a bad revolution. Such value judgements are meaningless. There is or is not a revolution depending on whether or not the Community restores the State to its functions of dialectical overcoming, thereby resolving through exceptional action the exceptional crisis that was leading it to its end.

The revolution is, therefore, an affirmation of the Community, which was being threatened by its internal contradictions because the State was no longer able to resolve them; it is a victory for the communal forces present within the very heart of the antagonistic groups. Through it, the struggle is overcome by the realisation of the

necessary solidarity between the elements of the conflict, which is more powerful than their rivalry. The *poly-dialectical* contradiction is resolved through the restoration of organic harmony, the result of the action of a restored State.

If the governing body of society were merely a passive outcome of communal forces, an inert expression of the collective will from which it springs, the transformation of society itself would determine its renewal. But since it is, on the contrary, the creator of the synthesis that takes place within it and through it (see Paragraph 51) and the organiser of the Community in accordance with the historical intention of which it is the custodian, the revolution can only be realised within it and through it. Priority of the political stage, but not primacy, of course: the revolution, an exceptional tension, has no social value except through the restructuring it carries out in all the fields where it was necessary. It cannot be limited to alleviating morphological deficiencies with its essentially momentary dynamism. It must resolve the problems posed, the consequence of which is crisis: that is to say, it must modify at their root—including, and fundamentally, the structural causes—the relations of forces incompatible with the social order. It is in this respect that the revolution, an essentially political phenomenon, is of interest to us in the present study.

149. Social mobility.

Apart from structural changes, though not unrelated to them, shifts occur throughout a community involving individuals and/or social groups moving between groups which, from a morphological point of view, remain unchanged. These movements are of fundamental importance, as they are capable of altering the functional adequacy of groups and communities by changing their quantitative and qualitative composition.

Some of the movements in question are horizontal in nature. In Chapter XI, we analysed those related to geographical territory which, due to their scale and direction, constitute migratory processes. However, apart from these, it happens in all communities and in all eras, albeit with highly variable frequency, that social groups change their place of residence and that individuals move from one company to another, adopt a new religion, join an association or, conversely, resign their membership, etc. The very biological evolution of human beings is enough to make such a phenomenon inevitable, and therefore normal: the child joins the family and then leaves it; the worker joins a company as an apprentice and retires when age demands and permits it. The psychological development of the individual, running parallel to biological development, justifies other changes: the worker in the pre-capitalist workshop, once he had learnt his trade, became a master craftsman and gained his independence. A desire to improve living conditions or mere psychological factors – for man is not a cog in a social machine that does not exist – sufficiently explain other cases of horizontal mobility.

Of far greater importance to the Community are vertical movements, to which the term 'social mobility' is often exclusively applied. These are the upward and downward movements through which individuals and groups change social stratum or sub-stratum and, consequently, their hierarchical position. Regulated by legal or customary norms, or simply accepted as a matter of fact by general consensus, such movements entail not only a functional differentiation but also a comparative assessment of the different strata of the population. They are, therefore, the consequence of two factors that influence the phenomenon in varying ways: the natural hierarchy of functions and the desire for recognition. When the relationship between two strata is that of boss to subordinate, the tendency towards change – almost always in an upward direction – is based on the combination of both factors. But this is not always the case: in today's industrial society, for example, a shop assistant enjoys a higher 'status' than a skilled worker, even though the latter's professional training – that is to say, their knowledge – and functional utility should place them far above the former. There is no shortage, however, of workers who aspire to join the lower middle class, whilst it would be very difficult to find employees who wish to become manual labourers. Vertical mobility does not always, therefore, respond to objective causes.

150. Closed sets and open sets.

Regardless of the degree of mobility within a given community, social groups differ in terms of how easy or difficult it is to join them. Hence, we speak of *closed* groups and *open* groups. It goes without saying that these terms almost always have a relative meaning. The most closed of biologically based groups, communities and strata must incorporate at least those individuals born within them, whilst the most closed of associatively based groups must replace members who die or leave. Conversely, only some geosocial communities unconditionally admit new members. We are referring here, of course, to organic groups: amorphous groups (see Chapter VII) are entirely open by nature.

If we consider closed and open communities separately, we encounter the same framework of relativity. The nuclear family is essentially closed. However, it is more so if it is of the monogamous type than if it allows for the gradual admission, over time, of several women. Conversely, a municipality is, with very few exceptions, an open community. Nevertheless, settlement within its territory may be subject to conditions, as was the case in pre-liberal communes, where the right of neighbourhood prevailed, and, until a few years ago, in the industrial cities of northern Italy, from which unemployed men were expelled.

In the case of horizontal mobility, the issue is of little socio-logical significance, as the nature and historical circumstances are sufficient to justify the

the location of different groups and communities within closed or open communities. Vertical mobility, on the other hand, often gives rise to controversy regarding the appropriateness of its gradation, with no obvious rules on the matter, except in the case of caste (see Paragraph 70), which, being based on ethnicity, remains outside the scope of any scientific discussion. No one, in fact, can change their race. But it is relatively easy to acquire a new functional capacity, especially if this is limited to the field of knowledge. To what extent, then, must the class, based on function (see Paragraph 65), be open to all functionally prepared individuals, and who will decide on the degree of preparation required? We stated above that there were no obvious rules in this regard. This does not mean that there are no criteria for judgement. The first of these is the realisation that the functional framework is not indefinitely expandable. At a given level of civilisation and organisation, the exercise of such a function requires an almost fixed number of individuals: the corresponding estate must be closed, as any growth or reduction would affect the organic order. Conversely, if some structural change makes a function increasingly unnecessary, numerical stability would render a stratum more and more parasitic; it must therefore open up to eliminate its now useless members. Conversely, a stratum founded on a function whose scope is expanding must incorporate new elements to enable it to meet the growing needs of the Community. This final part of our analysis requires us to expand on our previous definitions: a social group may be open or closed with regard to entry, exit, or both movements simultaneously. Thus, the caste, for example, being strictly closed to individuals of racial characteristics different from those that define it, automatically excludes its members who marry outside it.

151. Family mobility and individual mobility.

When referring, in the previous section, to vertical mobility, we spoke of individuals. This does not mean, however, that a change of social class is necessarily and typically an individual matter. It is so today as a consequence of social atomisation, but this constitutes a distinctly pathological phenomenon (see Section 173), of recent origin.

Under the Ancien Régime – as in Antiquity – the class system was based on the biosocial group. Functions – and first and foremost the 'office of king', as Louis XIV put it – were passed down through inheritance. There were lineages of ministers, landowners (in the true sense of the word), magistrates, cabinetmakers, farmers, and so on. Even certain ecclesiastical offices remained within the same family for generations. Functional continuity allowed the community to benefit from the group's biopsychic heritage and tradition, as well as to ensure that each position was filled by an individual trained in the most suitable environment. Under such conditions, the social strata were evidently closed, which, as we know, does not imply an immutable composition. There were changes in social stratum,

though few in number. However, with the exception of the clergy, social mobility almost always followed family structures. Nothing could be more appropriate from a community perspective.

An individual who moves up or down the social ladder in isolation effectively becomes uprooted. If they improve their position, they feel ashamed of their relatives; if they lose status, their family disowns them. In both cases, they find themselves alone and out of place: they no longer belong to their former social stratum, which either rejects them or which they reject; and they are unable to fully integrate into the new one, due to a lack of the necessary education and the resistance of the milieu into which they enter 'by stealth'. Only the priest escapes, to some extent, this law: the clergy – which, moreover, is more of an established body than a social stratum proper (see Paragraph 73) – is a special case by virtue of the religious and, at least for believers, timeless nature of its members' investiture. Except in this latter case, individual mobility breaks down the tissue-like structures of the social body, causing them to lose their consistency and thus leading society towards the pathological state of a herd (see Paragraph 173). Family mobility, on the other hand, gives change an organic character and necessarily proceeds at a much slower pace than the former. An individual – whether a social climber or a mere 'social climber' – may rise or fall socially due to accidental circumstances. A family, on the other hand, can only change in stages, because all its members must move together or wait for one another until a process is completed, the consequences of which then offer a full guarantee of permanence.

The contrast we have just highlighted between individual mobility and family mobility is clearly not absolute. Often, when an individual changes social class, they bring their family with them; which, it should be noted in passing, introduces heterogeneous elements into the receiving social stratum. On the other hand, family mobility is never so rigid as to prevent an exceptional individual from moving from one stratum to another. It merely hinders the movement, thereby guaranteeing its authenticity.

152. The factors of vertical mobility

The changes in social stratum – whether individual or familial – to which we referred in the previous paragraph stem from readily discernible causes that, in the final analysis, boil down to the relationship between ability and role. As a general rule, a social entity rises when it acquires characteristics that make it suitable for a position placing it in a stratum higher than its original one, and when it also possesses the necessary dynamism – what we commonly call ambition – to assert itself. Often, however, the imperative consensus by which an intermediate community – very exceptionally a Community – propels an individual or family towards hierarchical or representative positions serves to complement, and sometimes to replace, an insufficient will to assert oneself. The explanation for social decline is even simpler: it always lies in a process of degeneration, barring accidents which, from a sociological point of view,

are of no significance. This is one of the reasons why, in a healthy society, downward social mobility is negligible: in an environment that does not encourage it, individual or family decline is the exception rather than the rule.

Observation and historical analysis show us, on the contrary, that even in the most structurally stable societies – unless prevented by a caste system – there is constant and significant upward mobility. Even when their numbers do not increase, the upper strata continuously recruit individuals and families from the lower strata, whom they absorb. Genealogical studies provide us with decisive data in this regard. In 1789, the number of noble families in France that could trace their origins back to the Crusades did not exceed a few hundred. Today, there are fewer than fifty. The phenomenon can be compared to what happens when water boils: bubbles rise to the surface, remain there for a variable length of time, and then evaporate without leaving a trace.

This constant and gradual renewal of the elites is primarily due to demographic factors. As we noted earlier (see paragraph 89), the birth rate is inversely proportional to the standard of living, which in turn rises in tandem with social status. The upper strata of the population are therefore far less prolific than the lower strata. Added to this factor of demographic decline is the equally negative impact of the urban environment on birth rates, as the elites tend to concentrate in cities. Without upward social mobility, any community would gradually lose its hierarchical structure and, over time, become a herd.

In societies with a long history, the integration of those moving up the social ladder into the receiving strata takes place without major difficulties: newcomers are, as it were, absorbed and shaped by their new social environment. The problem is more difficult to solve in emerging communities, those created or fundamentally transformed by migration from lower social strata. Hierarchical roles ‘attract’, by selection, those most capable – or least incapable – of fulfilling them. But these individuals find no social mould to shape them. They must reinvent the aristocratic culture, without which they would never rise above the status of upstarts. The task before them is long and difficult; at times, quite simply, impossible. The mediocre member of a ruling class with a long-standing tradition always knows how to act: it is enough for them to look around or imitate their predecessors. The brilliant member of an improvised ruling class is left to their own devices: they must create everything on a purely experimental basis.

153. Upward social pressure.

The ability to climb the social ladder is not necessarily the same as the desire to do so. In every lower stratum there are individuals who far surpass their surroundings but are content with their lot. They possess the necessary qualities to rise, but do not apply their drive to attempting it:

lack social ambition. Conversely, there are individuals who, though lacking the qualities required to make a meaningful move up the social ladder, nevertheless aspire to do so. It may also be the case that there are more suitable candidates than there are 'positions' available. Hence this fundamental law of social dynamics: every stratum other than the lowest is subjected, by elements belonging to the layer or layers below it, to pressure that tends to displace it wholly or in part; every stratum other than the highest exerts, through some of its constituent elements, pressure on the stratum or strata above it, tending to displace them wholly or in part.

Whilst upward social pressure stems from the efforts of isolated individuals or families seeking to leave their social class of origin and join a higher one, resistance from the affected social stratum is easy. The situation is very different when those wishing to rise join forces to form a pressure group (see Paragraph 183) and even more so when they secure the support of their own stratum with a view to the overall displacement of the upper stratum. Such a struggle between social strata generally occurs in relation to the ruling class that another horizontal group—whether already structured or in the process of formation—tends to replace. It is, therefore, a political antagonism aimed at the conquest of power and, as such, falls outside the scope of sociology. [11] We cannot, however, fail to consider it here in terms of its structural consequences.

Let us note, first of all, that the antagonism in question is abnormal and therefore cannot be overcome through synthesis (see Paragraph 129). If the aim of the change is subversive, that is to say, if it consists in the seizure of power by elements seeking to use it for their own benefit, the success of the movement will result in the replacement of a functional class by a parasitic class and, consequently, the destruction or perversion of the natural social order, as occurred in Western Europe after 1789 and in Russia after 1917. If, on the other hand, the movement is of a revolutionary nature, that is to say, if it seeks to eliminate a parasitic ruling class with a view to a proper restructuring of the Community (see Paragraph 148), the result will be highly positive. This essential difference does not, however, prevent the dynamic process from being the same in both cases.

[11])- See Mahieu, Jaime María de, **The Community State**, Ed. Arayú, Buenos Aires, 1962.

XV. GENERAL INFRASTRUCTURAL CHANGES

154. General.

The structural and infrastructural changes that occur throughout history represent responses by the Community, or by one of its constituent groups, to living conditions that evolve over time. At times, the pressure of circumstances demands even more: particularly when it is exerted with particular force in one area of social activity. Faced with pressing problems of a certain nature, the solution to which determines its power and even its very existence, the Community must, for the time being, subordinate everything to one or other of its internal functions. One of its structures thus acquires, for a period of highly variable duration, paramount importance and becomes infrastructure (see Paragraph 38). Let us note clearly that the phenomenon is entirely independent of any value judgement: it is a mere accidental priority, not the primacy that naturally corresponds to this or that superior activity of the Community.

Arising from abnormal demands, in the true sense of the word, infrastructure is not, therefore, in and of itself, a constant reality. We do not find it when there is harmony between the major social forces of different kinds; that is to say, when each of these is situated precisely at its own dynamic functional level and is able to do so because circumstances do not tend to disrupt community life. Infrastructure only emerges when the conditions of social evolution demand a particular effort in this or that field, which compels the Community to reinforce the corresponding structure. This accidental predominance is, in itself, not at all pathological, even in cases where it constitutes the necessary response to anomalous pressure. Unless, of course, the corresponding force manages to escape political synthesis and impose itself on the State (see Chapter XIX).

All structures can acquire the operational supremacy that transforms them into infrastructures. In times of total war, the military structure plays the fundamental role, since all other social activities depend on it and are therefore subordinated to it; in times of famine, the economic structure; in times of epidemic, the health structure; in times of mystical exaltation, the religious structure; and so on. This last example indicates to us – though we shall return to the subject later – that not only structures proper but also superstructures (see Paragraph 39) are capable of becoming infrastructures.

The nature of social relations is not, therefore, a factor in dynamic prevalence, although it does influence the frequency and duration of different infrastructures. From this latter perspective, we must indeed distinguish between occasional infrastructures, which respond to the demands of the moment – a war, a famine, an epidemic, a mystical upsurge, etc. – and historical infrastructures,

historical infrastructures, which arise from enduring situations and leave their mark on long periods of social evolution. The former leave almost no trace once their causes have passed; the latter, on the contrary, endow the communities in which they manifest themselves with characteristics that may persist long after the return to harmony or a change of infrastructure. The Second World War, which for a few years gave rise, in some of the belligerent nations, to a military structure, clearly does not have the same significance, from this point of view, as the High Middle Ages, in which the same phenomenon endured for several centuries.

155. The economic infrastructure: consumer needs.

In our previous examples, we have mentioned famine as a factor in economic infrastructure. The episodic or chronic lack of sufficient food to sustain biological life, or at least the good health of the population, effectively leads the affected community to attach paramount importance to the supply of foodstuffs. However, like any catastrophe, famine only gives rise to a temporary dominance of economic forces. Historical observation and analysis reveal numerous instances in which the need for food has a vital influence on social development.

Let us take the example of a pastoral tribe that derives all its resources from livestock rearing. Its very survival therefore depends on the availability of the pasture that is essential for the animals. Hence, it moves constantly, changing its place of residence whenever the surrounding land is about to be exhausted. This nomadic lifestyle, of course, precludes any kind of settled life. The nuclear family loses much of its importance, whilst patriarchal authority is reinforced: everyone lives in close-knit groups, and it is the elder who, by tradition and experience, knows best where to go. On the other hand, production is carried out collectively, without it being possible to attribute to each member of the group the exclusive ownership of certain animals or even the performance of specific tasks, whilst the constant movement naturally leads to the collective preparation of food. The economic life of the tribe is, therefore, communal in nature. Let us add that nomadism hinders artistic creation, except in the field of poetry; it gives rise to a pantheistic interpretation of any religious creed – due to close contact with nature – and permits only the existence of customary law. In reality, all social forces derive, to a greater or lesser extent, from the economic infrastructure to which they must adapt. The same occurs in a community that derives its livelihood from fishing, but with opposite results. The vital need for a safe harbour anchors the community as a whole, whilst the convergence of home and boat tends to isolate family groups, which thus constitute socio-economic units of broad autonomy, despite the solidarity that unites them and which stems both from their shared peril and the vagaries of fishing.

Let us mention, as a final example, the case of a community that relies on monoculture without being in a position, for one reason or another, to diversify its production and which is therefore entirely dependent, to meet its consumption needs, on the goodwill of its buyers. The least that can be said is that such an economic infrastructure inevitably gives rise today to poverty, ignorance and an oligarchic regime devoid of genuine sovereignty.

156. The economic infrastructure: the division of labour.

Except in the pathological case of the capitalist system (see Note 195), the economic structure only becomes infrastructure when the demands of consumption take precedence over everything else, that is to say, when food production is not guaranteed. Such a situation does not arise solely in communities with an undifferentiated economy, as in our previous examples. We also find it in social groups where the division of labour prevails, that is, the distribution among individuals and/or specialised social groups of the tasks required for production. The consequences of the economic system in question are evidently the same, whether or not they are infrastructural. But if they are, as in the craft towns of the Middle Ages, they take on extraordinary importance.

The division of labour arose with the historic transition from a subsistence economy – characterised by self-sufficiency within patriarchal, semi-patriarchal or tribal communities – to an economy based on exchange. This has two consequences. On the one hand, greater technical and, in certain cases, artistic refinement, as the producer can devote all their time and skills to a single activity rather than being scattered across various and multiple tasks. The division of labour, therefore, allows man to specialise and, subsequently, to fulfil himself fully in the field in which he is most naturally inclined. This gives rise to very particular superstructural forms, based on the craft, which is both technical and artistic. Needless to say, all this applies only to the extent that the individual remains the master of his work and his creation, that is, as long as he has the opportunity—and indeed the need—to put the best of himself into his work. This is not the case when specialisation comes to dominate creation, mechanising man and stripping the product of his effort of all personal character.

Second consequence: greater socialisation of the production-consumption cycle, and this in two respects. On the one hand, consumption is only possible within an increasingly broad framework. Neither the individual nor the family unit consumes its own output; rather, to meet their basic needs, they depend on other individuals or groups—that is to say, on society—which, in turn, absorbs their output in a constant exchange of goods and services. As they become specialised, producers are no longer able to live autonomously. Social solidarity is no longer a luxury for them, nor even a simple expression of their nature, but a basic requirement for daily survival.

On the other hand, the division of labour encourages the formation of teams of producers dedicated to the same task, albeit often with varying degrees of functional training. And among producers of the same type of goods, a solidarity emerges based on a shared activity. Hence the organic structuring of producers, quite apart from the biosocial groups of which they continue to form part. In other words, the unique organisation of patriarchal or semi-patriarchal society is duplicated. The family persists as a consumer group. But the workshop emerges as a production group. And, beyond the workshop, the guild is formed—whether regulated or not—which is the equivalent in the field of production of what the village is in the field of consumption, that is, a federation of basic groups.

Today's civilised world is, therefore, in its economic structure – transformed into a superstructure by the capitalist system, for reasons and with consequences of a pathological nature that we shall analyse later (see paragraphs 195 to 199) – the immediate product, not of a choice based on desire, but of the division of labour, which imposes on production and consumption different – and more complex – modes than those that prevailed in patriarchal society.

157. The economic infrastructure: property.

When, for one reason or another, economic activities – consumption and production – become part of the infrastructure, the property regime, that is, the way in which things are disposed of, has a powerful impact on social evolution. Our present analysis would be incomplete if we did not address this aspect of the problem here.

Since consumption is a natural right of every social entity – whether individual or collective – it is clear that the goods essential for consumption to take place legitimately belong to those who need them. In other words, every social entity has, by its very nature, a right of ownership over the consumer goods required for its existence and fulfilment, regardless of the origin of such goods and within the limits determined by availability and the established order of priority. This means that no right, however legitimate, can take precedence over that which arises from necessity. As a corollary to the above, it follows that no one has a right of ownership over the consumer goods required by another social entity. Each person owns what they produce, but only to the extent that their production is intended to satisfy their own needs and those of those who depend on them. The head of the household is not making a gratuitous gift when providing food, clothing, shelter, etc., to his children and other dependent members of the group. He is merely fulfilling the duty imposed on him, above and beyond his right as a producer, by the natural law of consumption.

The foregoing applies, as a matter of logical consequence, to the goods used to produce, directly or indirectly, the necessary consumer goods. The producer is entitled to ownership of the tools, in the broadest sense of the word, without which he could not satisfy his own needs as a consumer. And, co-

As a corollary, no one has a right of ownership over the means of production belonging to others. Now, in today's world, and save for the exceptional case of the isolated craftsman, the producer is such only in his capacity as a member of a company. It is this company, therefore, considered as an organic whole independently of its current members, which, by natural right, owns its capital, just as a family owns its home or a local authority owns the public highway.

In the pre-liberal era, the concept of property was essentially linked to the privileges – rights and obligations – of the social entity. Hence, its scope was variable, and different property rights could coexist in relation to the same asset. The monarch was the owner of his kingdom, in the sense that he could dispose of all the assets of the Community in order to perform his sovereign functions. But a particular noble family was the owner of its lands – which already had an owner, the King – insofar as it exercised, by hereditary right, functions of command and administration over them. And the farmer was also the owner of his field – which already had two owners, the King and the lord – insofar as he used it to produce, subject to paying certain taxes to the lord and the King. This means that ownership was intertwined with the corresponding rights and obligations of a function. We shall see later (Paragraph 197) how the liberal regime has distorted the concept in question.

158. The economic infrastructure: development.

Until two hundred years ago, economic relations did or did not constitute the infrastructure of social evolution, depending on the pressing needs of the moment. Since the advent of liberalism, they have inevitably prevailed even in those communities that have restored the State's organic legitimacy. Underdeveloped social groups – or those artificially kept at a level lower than that corresponding to their stage of development – cannot assert themselves unless they act primarily in the economic sphere. For the simple reason of competition, their fulfilment depends fundamentally on their production. A regrettable but real situation: if the Athens of the 5th century BC were to re-emerge in our time, its creative work would have no impact whatsoever.

Development, an economic and social process aimed at the full utilisation of the Community's human and material resources, is essentially a human endeavour. For a creative people, a lack of material resources serves as an incentive. For an inferior people, an abundance of natural resources leads to inactivity. A creative people will invent and build the electronic brain they need. An inferior people will let the computer supplied to them rust away.

In reality, development cannot be measured by a single standard, as it is a process that depends on the potential of each people. The Pygmies of the Congo, who live by hunting elephants and employ a skilfully developed technique in doing so, are more developed than a certain European people of a creative race who

has never invented anything and lives off tourism. It should be noted that, within this context, development depends not only on modern man but also on the level of technology achieved in a given era—that is to say, on the legacy inherited from previous generations. The design of a spacecraft certainly demands a magnificent creative effort on the part of a team of today's scientists, but it also reflects the long civilising process spanning the thousands of years that separate us from our cave-dwelling ancestors.

By drawing upon the heritage and creative efforts of an entire people, development brings about profound structural changes that are rooted in the socio-economic infrastructure and stem from its dynamism. The pre-existing stability is disrupted. The rural population declines as people move to the cities. New industrial and commercial enterprises emerge, as do new technical colleges. At the same time, cultural standards fall as a result of growing materialism. High social mobility weakens the family, and the popularisation of science undermines religious structures. The masses become homogenised. The worker becomes a robot and the creator himself a narrow-minded specialist, with extensive knowledge in his field but a very low cultural level. All this is logical: the economic infrastructure influences the whole of society's life and gives it concrete form. The worst thing is that this is a process which, in our time, no community can resist without losing power and, at times, jeopardising its very existence.

159. The military infrastructure: unresolved antagonisms.

The transformation of military dynamics into infrastructure is of a completely different nature from that which we have described in relation to economic relations. The latter only become the predominant factor in a community's social evolution when living conditions are extremely primitive, when there is an abnormal shortage of food – or when a situation of pathological origin prevails. Military infrastructure, on the other hand, manifests itself in all eras and at all levels of civilisation, arising, in certain circumstances, from a historical constant: the existence, between communities and, at times, within a community, of unresolved antagonisms.

In all our previous analyses, we have referred to social evolution as a synthesis of forces, that is to say, as the continuity of the community. We have therefore set aside—though not without mentioning them on various occasions—the interactions that arise between conflicting forces which are unable to overcome their antagonisms. There has never been an effective superstate in the world. Neither the medieval papacy nor, even less so, the international organisations of our time have succeeded in unifying the forces of the community. At best, in certain cases, they have managed to arbitrate in conflicts or impose a cessation of hostilities. Whether mitigated or not, the antagonisms in question have always existed.

By synthesising its internal forces, every community tends, in effect, to assert itself at the highest possible level. When these forces are weak, or when overcoming their conflicts proves difficult, the resulting unity turns inwards. When, on the other hand, the Community manages to achieve a satisfactory synthesis of powerful dynamics, it seeks expansion and naturally pushes against the limits – not all of them geographical – that hinder its progress. The world then presents itself to us, in times of peace, as an unstable equilibrium of defensive and offensive communal forces that hold each other in check.

In order to act effectively in the face of opposing forces, these powers require suitable instruments. These come in various forms: demographic, economic, cultural, and so on. However, the most effective instrument is the armed forces, with their associated structures. Naturally, military organisation does not always hold the same importance in every Community. There are periods in history when, for reasons that do not concern us here, a balance is established between weakened forces or those of limited reach, and there are countries whose geographical situation or the interplay of forces greater than their own keeps them on the sidelines of explosive conflicts. The armed forces then play the mere role of a prudential public service or one for internal use. When, on the other hand, a community is preparing for a possible armed conflict or, even more so, enters into war, its military organisation takes on vital importance and necessarily becomes infrastructure. All other social activities are then placed at its service.

160. Military infrastructure: defence and aggression.

We have already had occasion to mention a historical example (see Note 38) of a similar military dominance in social development: that of the early Middle Ages in Europe. With the disintegration of the Roman Empire and later the Western Empire, which sought to continue it, and with its armies reduced to bands of marauders, the peasants gathered around easily defensible hilltops and sought out leaders capable of taking command. Thus fortified villages were formed, which were the origin of the fiefdoms.

In each of these communities, the chief's first task is to organise a militia. Every able-bodied man becomes a soldier, properly trained and armed. The fields are cultivated only if they are close enough to the fort – later a feudal castle – for the labourers to be able to retreat in time in the event of an attack, without worrying about who had previously owned them. Social stratification disappears: everyone occupies the position corresponding to their useful capacity in the present circumstances, whether they were previously a patrician or a slave. The leader, on whom the physical survival of the Community's members depends, commands in military matters, but also distributes tasks, lays down rules of coexistence, and settles any disputes that arise. For everything contributes to defence. It becomes the one-man state of a garrison community.

Fast-forwarding through the centuries, we find a similar case today: that of Israel. Jews from the *diaspora* who had infiltrated British Mandate Palestine between the two world wars seized the opportunity in 1948 to establish a state and expel the former Muslim inhabitants. Surrounded by enemies and in need of more territory, the new state organised and developed itself in accordance with the demands of defence and its plans for expansion. From its inception, military infrastructure has shaped all its activities.

Observation and historical analysis provide us with countless examples of warrior peoples driven by military necessity. Sparta features in all accounts, as do the Viking kingdoms. The same situation, though not as enduring, arises in the history of almost all societies when they face the threat of aggression or are preparing for an offensive war, at least if the anticipated conflict is to involve the entire population and not just professional armies. The 'state of war preparedness', as the Germans put it, demands strict planning of production and consumption with a view to meeting future needs. The military authorities then play a dominant role, as only they are in a position to set targets and draw up plans.

161. Military infrastructure: war.

With the outbreak of armed conflict, the obligation to confront the enemy and defeat them becomes self-evident. It is no longer a question of whether or not war was inevitable, but rather of committing all the Community's resources to it, as its power and, at times, its very existence are at stake. A change in the infrastructure of the military structure is a necessity. This does not mean placing the State under the command of the General Staff, but rather directing the Community's forces—which constitute the State—towards victory.

As a violent form of conflict between social entities, war demands, in effect, that its protagonists bring their internal energies to a head under extreme pressure. It thus constitutes a fundamental factor in unification and projection. Generally speaking, it provokes positive, vital reactions, both in the political sphere and in the cultural realm. Furthermore, it shapes the character of the people, hardening them by instilling a code of heroism and honour that brings their capacity for self-assertion and self-improvement to a fever pitch. The community becomes monolithic through the general acceptance of a common goal that is easily understood.

War also leads to a significant proportion of the civilian population being conscripted into the armed forces. Military structures consequently expand, and there is virtually no social group that does not lose, either temporarily or permanently, some of its members. Those not called up must take on the economic responsibilities of those who have been mobilised: women and pensioners enter the factories. The birth rate falls due to the absence of—

the role of heads of households. There is an acceleration in innovative processes. Contact with the enemy, brought about by the occupation of foreign lands and living alongside prisoners, often leads to unexpected cultural exchanges. In short, all aspects of community life are affected, directly or indirectly, by the changes brought about by the conflict.

Whilst it is true that war is, according to Clausewitz's famous phrase, 'the continuation of political relations (between communities) by other means', it is also the ultimate expression of politics, the science and art of governing the community: its violent expression. It is but a means, of course, but this means entails the supreme unification of the forces at play and the projection of their synthetic result with a degree of tension that peace does not allow to be attained: unification and tension which are precisely what the State – the political organ – seeks to achieve with a view to the greatest affirmation of the Community.

Needless to say, the above applies only to war between autonomous social groups. Civil war, no less military in nature than other forms of war and sometimes even more so, disrupts the continuity of the historical evolution of the community affected by it. The infrastructure of war thus manifests itself in fragmented forces. However, the nature of the phenomenon remains unchanged; only the scale of its manifestation changes.

162. Superstructural infrastructures.

Economic and military structures respond to immediate physical demands that leave no room for manoeuvre: either these demands are met at the level at which they arise, or the very existence of the Community is at risk. It is therefore easy to understand why they become infrastructures when necessity demands a special focus on one or other of the corresponding activities. It seems less logical that a superstructure (see Paragraph 39), which is always dispensable, should come to dominate the whole of social evolution. Yet the phenomenon does occur, albeit infrequently and for a short duration. There are peoples – just as there are individuals – who, in certain circumstances, allow themselves to be swept along by a conviction so firm that they are prepared to accept destruction itself rather than renounce their beliefs, their ideas or their customs. By 'conviction' we do not, of course, mean a mere certainty of rational origin, but rather a mental attitude that engages the entirety of biopsychic life. For a superstructure to become an infrastructure, it must take on the character of a collective exaltation. It may or may not be justified empirically or rationally: it always imposes itself with such passionate force that it is considered futile to demonstrate its validity and sacrilegious to question its principles. In a word, it is a form of mysticism.

It will come as no surprise, then, to find that the most prevalent superstructural framework in history is of a religious nature. The Crusades, and esp-

The First Crusade, in particular, provides us with a classic example of an irresistible social momentum driven by faith. Hundreds of thousands of men from all walks of life abandoned their family lives and economic activities to set out on a long journey through unknown lands to liberate the Holy Places, led by princes who temporarily set aside their rivalries. Any rational analysis of the situation would have deterred them all. But religious enthusiasm overrides all reason. The fact that the Papacy, with the aim of weakening the sovereigns who resisted its authority, took advantage of and perhaps instigated the expeditions does not diminish their mystical character: we know that, barring pathological cases, the infrastructure is subject to political leadership, and Rome, in this instance, was clearly acting for political ends.

As powerful as faith, ideology—a set of incomplete, imprecise and fluctuating doctrinal elements that define trends without providing firm guidelines—is capable of sparking collective movements no less irresistible in their momentum, though generally less resilient in the face of failure. In our time, ideological mysticism seems to have replaced religious mysticism as the main cause of popular exaltation. Bolshevism and, in its various national forms, fascism have proved capable of stirring peoples and masses by projecting into their minds myths that generate collective passions and emotions which, at times, take on a distinctly infrastructural character.

XVI SUPERSTRUCTURAL CHANGES

163. General.

By their psychological nature (see Paragraph 39), superstructures are far more fluid than the structures themselves. This does not mean that they necessarily change more frequently, but rather that they are fluid and in perpetual evolution, even whilst remaining stable in their broad outlines. To illustrate this point, one need only compare the psychological relationships that bind a man and a woman within the family with the biological relationship that unites them and forms the structural basis of the group.

On the scale of historical evolution, the fluidity of superstructures compels the analyst to adopt a schematic approach that allows them to clearly define distinct historical periods, yet often prevents them from recognising the essential continuity of change. Thus, we have become accustomed to viewing the Christianisation of Europe as a break with paganism and the Renaissance as a rejection of the Middle Ages. We fail to perceive that, in both cases, these are successive stages of the same process. Not only did the transformation take a long time to take place, but the

visible change did not occur by virtue of a sudden upheaval in the evolutionary process of paganism itself and of the Middle Ages themselves.

What also makes it difficult to analyse superstructures is that they only very rarely belong to a single community. Generally, they manifest themselves across several autonomous social groups, thus giving the impression that they are independent of the community to which they appear to be superimposed, like clouds drifting over a continent and bringing rain without regard for the borders and territory of any particular country. Structures may be the same across several communities, as they usually are; yet this does not mean that the groups constituted according to them cease to belong clearly to this or that particular autonomous group. Insofar as a belief, an idea or a shared value has an abstract reality that appears distinct from its concrete manifestations.

There are three reasons for this apparent superstructural independence. Firstly, the living conditions of several neighbouring communities tend to evolve in parallel and, as such, require identical responses. Secondly, psychological creations circulate very easily from one community to another, which allows for a constant exchange and, through imitation, leads to a great similarity – often more apparent than real – in forms. Finally, and this is the most important point, race, which is rarely exclusive to a single community, constitutes a fundamental factor in superstructures. These, in fact, arise from functional structures but transcend them by interpreting them. The hierarchical relationships between rulers and the ruled are the same in all social groups because they stem from human nature. But the application of justice, for example, which depends on the conception of law, varies considerably from race to race even when the legislative text is the same. The ethnic substratum (see paragraphs 136 to 138) certainly influences the structures, but it does so through the superstructures that stem directly from it.

The creative capacity of the races, as we know (see Paragraph 95), varies greatly. It stems, in fact, not only from psychic ability but also, and above all, from mental dynamism—that is to say, the drive for progress. The results achieved, however, do not derive exclusively from these factors. The sharpest intelligence, the most exquisite sensitivity and the most determined creative drive would not be the cause of any appreciable progress without memory, which, thanks to language, allows knowledge to be accumulated and progress to be made from an ever-higher foundation. Raised in a Palaeolithic tribe, even the most brilliant of today's individuals would not be able to discover even the origin of rain. Man is an heir (see Paragraph 3) and draws upon the creations of his predecessors to go further than they did.

Such progress is neither continuous nor boundless, however. There are races that are incapable of creating beyond a certain level. There are others that stagnate, as if

mentally sterilised, and confine themselves to imitating themselves or copying others. Even those that continue to move forward do not do so constantly with the same impetus. In short, there are Communities that degenerate and regress (see Paragraph 229). The myth of Progress, so dear to certain thinkers of the last two centuries, does not stand up to the evidence of historical analysis. It is not enough for a form to be new for it to be better. People today are undoubtedly far more civilised than those of the Neolithic era, but it is not at all clear that they are more so than the Athenians of the 5th century BC or the Europeans of the 13th century. Like the very social evolution of which they form part, and whatever scale of values serves as the criterion for our judgements, superstructural dynamics follow a sinusoidal curve with a variable resultant (see Paragraph 133).

The famous 'law of the three stages' is directly linked to the myth of Progress, through which Auguste Comte believed he could formulate the inevitable historical order of superstructures. So realistic in other respects, the father of scientific sociology paid tribute to his era when he maintained that humanity, and within it every people, necessarily and successively passed through the theological or fictitious stage, the metaphysical or abstract stage, and the scientific or positive stage. Historical analysis is far from confirming such an interpretation. Rather, it shows us that the three stages in question are present, in varying proportions, in all eras. And the prevalence of the scientific – that is to say, relative – explanation of phenomena over the theological and metaphysical does not, by any means, constitute progress, let alone an insurmountable goal for human thought.

165. Civilisation and culture.

Let us acknowledge that any comparative judgement of levels of civilisation is open to debate, as it depends on the scale of values upon which we base it; this scale constitutes a variable superstructure that depends on the civilisation in question. It is, therefore, a vicious circle that is impossible to break.

The very concept of civilisation is very difficult to define. It is often confused with culture, knowledge, sensibility and even technical development. No people consider themselves barbaric: the barbarian is always the other. Nothing could be more natural, despite the imprecision of the language that the concept gives rise to. For civilisation is nothing other than the psychosocial heritage built up over the centuries, which enables humankind to benefit from all that has been acquired through the efforts of previous generations. The term therefore applies validly to any set of past achievements, regardless of what these may be and of their value from any particular point of view. Hence, every civilisation has its own characteristics in terms of its lines of evolution and its current and potential degree of development.

In practice, the term takes on a certain degree of scientifically acceptable relativity. Pure barbarism is the state of a person who has inherited nothing from their ancestors: the savage who lives like any other animal, or the proletarian who has

been deprived of the superstructural assets belonging to the Community. But, beyond these limits, we shall correctly call civilisation any appreciable capital produced by accumulated creations. A civilised people is not necessarily creative: but it was, or received an undeserved inheritance. If it is or was, the civilisation it possesses is the fruit of its ethnic endowments. If, on the other hand, it benefits from a foreign civilisation, it either incorporates it by adapting it to its authentic self, or it merely repeats a lesson learned well or poorly and thus loses its originality, acquiring nothing more than a veneer that may be deceptive but is always insubstantial.

The concept of culture is even more difficult to grasp than that of civilisation. Etymology, however, helps us to do so. Cultivating the land does not mean planting it with trees, but preparing it in such a way that the seed sown in it finds soil ready to receive it and enable it to fulfil its full potential, bearing flowers and fruit. Human culture is the result of a similar preparation, of a process of formation that makes one capable of feeling, thinking, acting and creating, and also, more generally, of adopting this or that attitude towards life. Madame de Staël's definition is only paradoxical in appearance. Culture is truly 'what remains when everything else has been forgotten': sensitivity, intelligence and drive.

Now then: the individual is born into a society that possesses a civilisation of which the methods of educating children and adults form part. And by 'methods' we do not mean so much educational techniques as the variety of pressures that the environment exerts on the individual who emerges and develops within it. But individuals experience the influence of the shared environment differently. They do not all have the same biopsychic heritage. Not everyone is destined to fulfil the same role. Culture cannot, therefore, be identical for everyone. On the contrary, it must be suited to the 'terrain' to which it is applied. Training a police dog to hunt would be a waste of time. Subjecting a Congolese person to the disciplines of the Greco-Roman humanities would not suffice to instil in them the Western conception of the world and would only make them a misfit. Hence, each civilisation diversifies, under the influence of the particular living conditions of the various population centres, into multiple cultures corresponding to the communities, intermediate communities and social strata it encompasses. One can thus speak, within Western civilisation, of Mediterranean and Nordic cultures, French and Argentine cultures, Andalusian and Tucuman cultures, aristocratic and working-class cultures, and so on. These are forms that each evolve independently within the general framework that gives them their substance and which they, in turn, enrich or weaken with their creative and interpretative contributions.

166. Art and philosophy.

Being, as we have just seen, a superstructural legacy made up of accumulated creations, it would seem at first glance, contrary to our analysis in the penultimate paragraph, that civilisation could never regress and that, in

, it would stagnate in the mere repetition of the past. However, this is not the case. Changing living conditions do, in fact, demand constant creative adaptation, even to preserve a heritage which, without it, would gradually lose its vitality and, consequently, its relevance. What does a heritage mean to the Greeks of today which, due to the transformation their race has undergone, they are no longer capable of fully understanding? . What cultural value does a gallery of paintings hold for a Parisian banker of our century, when it constitutes for him nothing more than a safe investment? The great creative explosions that mark the peaks of the evolutionary curve are normally followed by periods of relaxation. But these, which prepare the ground for new expressions, have nothing to do with the stagnation of incomprehension.

Creation, indeed, is always the work of an *elite*. But, in order to be civilising, it requires a receptive and interpretative environment. This is particularly true of art and philosophy, which, starting from the small groups that provide them with new elements, must radiate outwards in concentric circles of diminishing resonance until they influence the less educated sections of the population. Hence the importance of communication, which demands both adequate preparation on the part of the receiving public – a culture – and the use by the creator of a comprehensible language. The artist and the philosopher, in effect, condense the flow of their thought into fixed relationships; that is, into images, giving the word the broad sense it has in psychology. They therefore resort to a conventional symbolism, gradually established and modified over the centuries, which is social in nature in the sense that it is known and understood, to a greater or lesser extent. This language is made up of pre-established formulas which the creator is compelled to accept if he wishes to make his contribution to the civilisation that informs him. He is, of course, free to move away from accepted metaphors in order to seek and employ a new symbolism that is strictly personal to him and that better expresses the shifting substance of his inner life. But in doing so, he condemns himself to an esotericism that constitutes a form of social parasitism. He achieves this by exploiting a collective heritage to which he refuses to contribute a work that he selfishly keeps to himself.

Art and philosophy are undoubtedly the fields in which creativity has the greatest potential to spread, albeit with diminishing yet real influence, even to the least educated sections of society. By its very presence, a work of art shapes and refines the viewer's sensibility, whilst the conception of the world and of life projected by philosophy influences collective thought and guides the actions of the people as a whole. Thus the aristocratic character of civilisation is defined more clearly.

167. Science.

Like art and philosophy, science is the work of an *elite* minority, and the knowledge it acquires becomes diluted as it spreads through the various social strata. We cannot, however, place it on the same level as the disciplines

mentioned above. For it differs from them, nowadays, in one fundamental respect: it has practical applications, particularly in the economic sphere.

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For millennia, science, too, was purely speculative. It sought, for cognitive and educational purposes, to establish the laws governing the material world. It is not that our ancestors were incapable of going further. We know of steam engines that moved the doors of Egyptian temples and Greek statues. We have found an electric battery in the ancient ruins of Baghdad. And medieval alchemy is far from having revealed all its secrets to us. Moreover, the design of a Roman aqueduct or the construction of a Gothic cathedral required no less scientific knowledge than the manufacture of this or that machine today. But, until the advent of capitalism, there was no interest in mechanising production, a field reserved for art and its derivative, craftsmanship.

For the past two hundred years, science has become ambivalent. On the one hand, it continues to accumulate, at a rapid pace, knowledge that serves to enrich civilisation. Applied on a large scale to the transformation of nature, it extends humanity's dominion over its cosmic environment, thereby enabling greater creative action. Yet, on the other hand, mechanisation – even setting aside its misuse within a pathological regime (see Paragraph 177) – turns the producer into a robot and substitutes quantity for quality. Thus are the artisanal techniques that constituted an important part of a heritage spanning centuries and millennia being lost. Thus is the sensibility of the people, across all strata, disappearing, crushed by 'functional' designs, synthetic materials, garish colours and chemical drinks. Thus is general culture being debased, perverted by the mass media operating at the level of the masses. To speak of 'industrial civilisation' is a joke in poor taste. Mechanisation has caused more harm to civilisation than all the barbarian invaders put together.

The fundamental reason for this sinister effectiveness lies in the exclusively rational nature of science. Art and philosophy engage the creator and the recipient in the entirety of their human nature. Science, on the other hand, disembodies its practitioner, reducing them to a mind indifferent to anything other than the mathematical precision of discoveries and their potential applications. There is no shortage of scientists who would blow up the planet to prove a theory.

168. Religion.

Art, philosophy and science influence historical evolution by imposing common values and ideas on all members of society, albeit to varying degrees depending on the cultural level of the different strata. But only small creative minorities play an active role in these fields. The great ma-

For the most part, it merely absorbs external elements, assimilating them to the best of its ability. From this perspective, religious and ethical superstructures appear quite different. They are, of course, also the result of minority initiatives, but they are built upon foundations that stem from the very nature of human beings in their dual capacity as individuals and members of society, and they develop with the active participation of everyone.

However little he may reflect, man cannot help but ponder questions concerning the origin of the world of which he is a part and the purpose of his own life. His very imperfection leads him to seek supernatural explanations for that which is beyond his understanding. Thus, he comes to admit the existence of one or more beings, external to and superior to normally perceptible reality, who govern the chain of cosmic phenomena. He defines these gods in relation to human nature, attributing to them his own qualities and possibilities, but to the highest degree, and denying them his own defects and limitations. Except for the metaphysician, who sometimes and to a certain extent manages to escape such anthropomorphism, the supernatural being is nothing but a superman, a father or master, capable of helping or harming humans according to the judgements he forms and the feelings he experiences towards them. People therefore seek to make contact, to ingratiate themselves and even to make a pact with him. Hence prayer, ritual practices and, at the highest level, mystical exercises. 297

From a sociological perspective—the only one of interest to us here—religion is, therefore, a set of beliefs and practices relating to the Divine, regarded as the first cause of the universe and the ultimate purpose of human behaviour. Its social nature is evident, not only in the ecclesiastical structures it gives rise to, but also in its considerable influence on collective behaviour. Faith in the Middle Ages contributed powerfully to energising and guiding the social evolution of the period, whilst the dogma of predestination plunged some Islamised peoples into passivity.

These two examples have not been chosen at random. They enable us, in fact, to clearly illustrate two contradictory aspects of religious superstructures. In the first case, a strong race imposes its natural dynamism on the beliefs it adopts and transforms: nothing could be further removed from early Judeo-Christianity than the heroic Catholicism of the Crusaders. In the second, a belief so effectively alters the mindset of decadent peoples that it manages to lull them into complacency for centuries.

169. Ethics.

Like religion, to which they are so closely linked, moral values arise from human nature. There are no objective values that serve as inner beacons for the individual's conduct and judgements, and whose guidance

grasp moral consciousness. In reality, it is the psyche—or the subconscious—that makes judgements based on the personal data it possesses. [12] However, we should not assume that ethics is as unstable as one might suppose when considering the perpetual evolution of thought. There are constant dynamics within the human being that constitute the permanent traits of personality insofar as it is specific and particular, and which form the basis of one's moral criteria. Among these constants are those relating to the social nature of man. Hence the opposition, more or less marked, between individual morality and social morality.

The ethical values that arise from the demands of communal life serve to limit the personal autonomy of actions and judgements. The individual accepts the 'prefabricated' normative models that emerge from their environment and constructs others using the elements provided by their experience of community life, because their nature not only tolerates these but demands them. This does not preclude inner conflicts. Essentially, man is a social animal, but not a member of this or that particular group. Therefore, the principle of social value is indisputable, but not this or that specific value arising from a particular mode of historical evolution. This means that ethics, like other superstructures, is changeable, though not in its entirety, and that man, in this field too, is a creator.

Now, an individual's behaviour depends on morality; in other words, it determines the direction in which their energy is channelled. It is morality that shapes the hero and the criminal. It is morality that gives rise to self-sacrifice and parasitism. Its norms therefore have a direct influence on the affirmation and development of the collective social entity.

The values of peace – love, solidarity, charity, etc. – are generally not disputed, as adherence to them is the obvious prerequisite for coexistence. An exception to this in today's world is honour (the affirmation of personal worth by the individual and the intention to respect it and ensure it is respected), which is disparaged and even regarded as negative. However, as human beings are naturally – and, at times, voluntarily – integrated into groups and communities, honour entails the affirmation, even to the point of individual sacrifice, of social values. It is the foundation of loyalty to the norms of collective life and to the natural leaders who embody the hierarchical order of the community. Honour thus constitutes a fundamental aspect of social ethics. Respect for the structures essential to the affirmation of any human community depends largely on it.

Values associated with war are less readily accepted than those associated with peace. This is particularly true of heroism, the acceptance and pursuit of risk, and

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[12])- Cf. Mahieu, Jaime María de, *La naturaleza del hombre*, Ed. Arayú, Buenos Aires, 1955.

sacrifice for the sake of a higher interest or one considered as such. This is, however, an important factor in historical evolution, since it is largely from this that, in times of war, the internal tension of the social entity in conflict arises, along with its capacity for self-assertion in the struggle and for projection in victory, as well as its capacity for reaction in defeat.

170. The law.

Compared with ethical norms, legal superstructures seem to be characterised by their instability. The morals of a people change over the course of centuries, if not millennia, whilst its law – that is, the body of rules governing, or which ought to govern, the coexistence of its constituent elements, both individual and collective – gives the impression of changing day by day. This is a mistaken impression, arising from the fact that we encompass three distinct realities within a single concept: natural law, the set of norms deriving from the very nature of social entities, considered in their necessary relationships; customary law, the set of rules that have arisen, in the course of history, from the demands of coexistence; and legislative – or positive – law, the set of rules enacted by the constituted powers. Only the latter is sometimes subject to instability that reflects a pathological or revolutionary situation. Natural law may be violated, but not altered. Customary law is nothing more than the secondary adaptation of the former to the changes in circumstances that occur throughout history, that is to say, variations on the same permanent theme.

Natural law and customary law reflect the necessary reality of contemporary social life. Statutory law, by contrast, is always either lagging behind or running ahead of that reality. It merely sets out in formal terms the institutions—whether satisfactory or not—of a particular era. But not of the present era, rather of a past that has been more or less updated. From this point of view, therefore, it is merely a matter of the legal survival of a de facto situation that is in the process of being constantly superseded, but which nonetheless continues to form the historical substrate of present-day social evolution. On the other hand, statutory law formulates rules designed to bring about, in the more or less near future, changes that the authorities deem necessary.

Even if it were legitimate in that it validly expresses, at a given moment, a rule of natural law, written law is dangerous. By its very wording, it effectively freezes the flow of evolution into which it seeks to fit. Adapted to the present with a view to the future, it is already outdated by the time it is enacted and will become increasingly out of date as time goes on. Intended for the future, it will undoubtedly play its part in the history to come, but this will nevertheless, to some extent, differ from what the legislator expected, or even foresaw. Hence the inadequacy of the text to a situation which, nevertheless, it will have helped to bring about. A necessary evil in communities too large for customary law alone to govern them, written law in

It is futile to attempt to express or anticipate social evolution. The legislative powers must therefore constantly not only amend it but also interpret it: which is why they must stand above it. The so-called 'absolute law' which, according to pan-jurist theorists, is said to govern historical evolution is the very negation of valid law.

171. Custom.

Unlike statutory law, common law has no independent existence. It consists of rules that form part of custom and which the executive and judicial authorities recognise as satisfactorily meeting the basic requirements of everyday life. In applying it, the authorities demonstrate their respect for the established order and their willingness not to introduce change into relationships that have evolved over a long period of experience. However, alongside this law, there are countless rules of the same nature but of lesser importance, whose validity stems from spontaneous social pressure. No court will punish a breach of a rule of courtesy, but the rude person will be excluded from certain circles and shunned by all members of the social group where their behaviour is deemed offensive.

Custom encompasses all the rules of social coexistence – regardless of how binding they may be – that have evolved over time, whether or not they are grounded in natural law. Their acceptance by the individuals subject to them stems neither from the principle of authority nor, even less so, from reason. Customary norms are not obeyed because they are backed by power or because they are deemed useful, but because 'this is how things are done' and has been done for a very long time. It is, therefore, a true empirical social science that establishes the experiential constants determined by practice.

Custom is, therefore, a factor of continuity in the historical evolution from which it stems. It leads individuals to follow the example of their ancestors and to act 'as has always been done'. Yet, by its very irrational nature, it prevents any distinction between what must remain constant and what is legitimately subject to change. It preserves the past simply because it is the past, not because it is valid. It thus hinders the necessary adaptation when this becomes a matter of urgency. Whilst acting as a safeguard against ill-considered changes, it can lead to stagnation that prevents the necessary changes demanded by new external factors in social evolution.

At first glance, fashion seems to be the polar opposite of custom. Indeed, it neither seeks nor achieves continuity, but rather unmotivated—or at the very least, unnecessary—change. However, by its very nature, it undoubtedly belongs to the field we are studying: it is a set of irrationally accepted norms, the violation of which is punished with contempt or ridicule that isolates the archaic individual from their social milieu. What gives us the impression of a fundamental difference between the two phenomena is the fact that nowadays, in

In the civilised world, fashion changes at breakneck speed and, to some extent, lacks the essential characteristic of custom. But this was not always the case, far from it. Until a few decades ago, fashion was nothing more than the distinctive custom of small, high-status social groups. Closely linked to artistic creation, from which it originated, it spread and gradually became diluted, through imitation, amongst urban populations. Only its widespread adoption brought about change. Greater social mobility, egalitarian theories and, above all, the influence of the mass media have accelerated and expanded the process. As soon as it is created, a new fashion is adopted by almost everyone, and the distinctive minority must replace it with another to remain distinct. At the same time, creative sources are multiplying, and the downward process of the past is joined by the upward spread of fashions born in lower, if not marginal, social groups. As we observe it, fashion is custom run amok: everyone wants to stand out from the crowd and, at the same time, massively imitates any new social trend. We shall return to this point (see Paragraph 207), which has taken on a distinctly pathological character.

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BOOK FOUR

PATHOLOGY

XVII STRUCTURAL DISINTEGRATION

172. Individualism and egalitarianism.

In analysing, in previous volumes, the organisation and evolution of human societies, we could not fail to mention the various shortcomings that manifest themselves in certain cases and undermine the norms of the natural social order—that is to say, the dynamic harmony that results from the adaptation of structures to the demands of nature and history. Order expresses the proper functioning of the social organism and, therefore, the fulfilment of its guiding purpose. Naturally, it cannot exist if every constituent element of the group in question is not in its proper place and, in turn, does not function properly. However, none of these factors of social order occurs automatically. Human imperfection has negative consequences for both social life and individual existence. Thanks to observation and historical analysis, we possess abundant data on the pathological phenomena that shape the morphology, demology and dynamics of human communities; we can thus undertake the study of these, as is fitting to complete our three previous approaches.

Structural illnesses, the subject of this chapter, arise from the loosening or distortion of the bonds linking the individuals who make up a given social group. We are not, therefore, concerned here with the violation of social norms by criminals (see Chapter XXI), but rather with the systematic rejection of the necessary order by the members of the affected groups or communities. If these groups are regarded as mere outcomes of the voluntary association of free individuals, and if the individual is considered superior to any human collective, it follows that social relations will only endure to the extent that they satisfy the immediate self-assertion of those they bind together. Taken to its extreme consequences, such individualism would lead to the total disintegration of society and the very disappearance of the human race, since the child is born into a social group that predates him or her—the couple—whose presence transforms them into a family, without whose selfless care the child could not survive.

Egalitarianism exacerbates the pathological consequences of the aforementioned tendency. If, indeed, all individuals have the same rights and obligations in every sphere of social life, human beings become depersonalised, turning into an abstract—and therefore unreal—schema, and all hierarchical relationships disappear. However, we know that groups and communities exist and develop

precisely by virtue of the differentiation and inequality of their individual components. They are not made up of Men but of men and women, adults and children, whites and blacks, leaders and subordinates, creators and assimilators, and so on. There would be no family, nor even reproduction, without sexual differentiation and inequality. There would be no community without hierarchical differentiation and inequality. There would be no civilisation without qualitative differentiation and inequality. Egalitarianism denies necessary reality and, consequently, gives rise to social disorder.

173. Massification.

The destruction or weakening of social structures through the pathological reinforcement of individual autonomy and the no less pathological egalitarian schematisation of human beings tends to turn the people into a mass; that is, an organic whole of human beings framed within groups and communities, whose 'raw material' consists of an amorphous mass of individuals merely unified—irrespective of the structures that bind them—by common psychological attitudes (see Paragraph 75).

The mass emerges and acts when some emotional factor succeeds in causing the members of the people to momentarily forget the immediate realities of their social existence. The phenomenon depends, therefore, on the balance of power established between the unifying force and structural resistance. Normally, only an exceptional stimulus is capable of transforming the 'man-of-the-people' into a 'man-of-the-masses', causing him to renounce the behaviour demanded of him by the groups and communities of which he forms part. But social structures, when they weaken, lose their power of attraction, and the slightest collective incitement is enough to overcome them. It is no coincidence that the Western proletariat, fragmented by the living and working conditions imposed on wage labourers, began to act as a mass long before the other, less disintegrated social strata.

Until a few decades ago, however, mass-appeal messages were so difficult to disseminate that they rarely managed to mobilise crowds, even in relaxed social settings. The media were limited to public speaking – from the pulpit and the podium – and, later, to a small-circulation press. The situation has changed with the advent of cinema, radio and television, whilst widespread literacy has considerably increased the reach of newspapers and magazines. It is now possible to exert pressure on people's minds to such an extent that the structural framework, however solid it may be, proves incapable of preventing mass manipulation. Audiovisual techniques, in particular, make it possible to condition the vast majority of individuals, forcing them to act against what would be their freely formed will. The mass thus supersedes the people as a permanent reality. Organic structures and massive superstructures compete, with the logical predominance of the latter, in determining the attitudes that constitute the dynamic fabric of social evolution.

It is obvious, moreover, that such artificial massification is not the result of mere chance but rather serves a distinctly subversive purpose. The masses, indeed, are easy to manipulate, whereas the people resist pathological manipulation more effectively. Every illegitimate state (see Paragraph 180 and Chapter XIX) – and therefore a weak one – tends to break down the structures it cannot control. Thus Napoleon, in a famous letter, advised his brother Joseph, then King of Naples, to implement the new French Civil Code, which, by abolishing primogeniture, would undermine the foundations of the family. It is no wonder, then, that the media are employed by pathological ruling minorities to undermine the natural social order. Through the ideas and images they disseminate, the principle of authority is undermined, the family is ridiculed, money is deified, superstition is propagated, and so on. This is a classic case of negative interaction: the weakening of structures creates the masses, and the masses serve as a weapon against the structures. The logical end of this process is the herd or the prison towards which the contemporary world is rapidly heading.

174. Sexual promiscuity.

It is clear that today's Western society is moving towards a herd mentality if we consider it from the perspective of its members' sex lives. In this sphere, it is not possible to achieve absolute individualism, which, by eliminating the couple, would prevent reproduction. However, it is possible to weaken family structures to such an extent that the biosocial group loses its stability, coherence and continuity. To achieve this, it is sufficient to turn every sexual encounter into an act of mere pleasure devoid of social commitments. We already know (see Paragraph 41) that the couple finds its very basis in man's sexual excess and that it is inherently unstable. It is only consolidated, becoming a family, with the birth of a child. The sexual relationship then loses its contractual nature and becomes part of a more complex structural whole. This transformation does not occur if the couple continues to regard itself as such despite the change, denying any social consequences. Men and women then mate according to their feelings and desires of the moment. Sexual promiscuity replaces the family order. The society of the Marquesas Islands provides us with a historical example of such an almost perfect disintegration of the biosocial group.

There are several factors behind such a lack of structure. The much-criticised concept of pansexualism is the least significant of these. Far more serious, indeed, is the romanticism that makes the formation and endurance of the marital bond dependent on love. There is nothing more fickle, in fact, than emotion, especially when one considers that men and women do not develop at the same pace. To confuse the biological relationship—the structural foundation of the family—with sexual attraction or, worse still, with romantic passion, is to strip it of all stability. It is well known from experience that 'marriages of convenience' are, on the whole, far more solid than 'marriages of love', precisely because sentimental fantasies do not affect their duration. Peasants never, under any circumstances,

On the one hand, they have been characterised by their moral rigidity in matters of sexuality. It is they, however, who provide us with the most satisfying example of family stability. Marital fidelity is certainly a desirable virtue: yet it is not sufficiently ingrained in human nature to serve as the foundation of the biosocial group.

Puritanical moralism is closely linked to romantic sentimentality, despite their apparent contradictions. The former places blind faith in love; the latter subordinates everything to morality. As regards our subject, both agree in condemning prostitution, which facilitates the sexual act without love or virtue. It is, however, as we have seen (Paragraph 41), a natural consequence of the superabundance with which the sexual instinct manifests itself in human beings, and especially in men. A necessary evil, as St Augustine said; and the Catholic Church, until a few decades ago, tolerated and regulated it. Not only does prostitution allow men incapable of self-control the easy satisfaction of their sexual urges, but it also constitutes a genuine social 'fixation outlet'. The prostitute protects other women from Don Juan-like or criminal advances and, above all, allows the unsatisfied man to find an outlet that does not endanger the stability of his home, as an 'extramarital affair' would. Prostitution can be affected by pathological deviations, such as 'white slavery' and pimping, two aspects of its capitalist exploitation. But, in itself, it is nothing more than a public service and should be organised as such. To ban it is to take a significant step towards sexual promiscuity, as so many contemporary examples demonstrate, and to encourage homosexuality, the logical consequence of sexual egalitarianism.

175. The unstable family.

Egalitarian individualism has not yet succeeded in destroying family structures, but for the past two hundred years it has been weakening them at an accelerated pace. This process is influenced both by the loosening of customs brought about by the spread of subversive ideas and by legislation which, far from protecting the biosocial group, actually encourages its disintegration, as well as by the material conditions of life imposed by capitalism.

The most far-reaching phenomenon in this field is undoubtedly the growing independence of women in society and, consequently, within the family. Feminism has placed both sexes on an equal footing in terms of experience, whilst economic difficulties increasingly compel the former wife and mother to take up paid employment. If women come to be, on a par with men and in competition with them, workers, professionals and even company directors, and if they have access to public office, it will be difficult to impose respect for marital authority upon them. The basic couple of the biosocial group thus becomes, contrary to the real demands of the natural order, a deliberate partnership devoid of any relationship of authority. Such a situation inevitably affects the behaviour of the children who, subjected to a dual and often contradictory command, increasingly impose their own will. The family is

It becomes chaotic and loses its coherence. It may even lose its biological continuity as a result of the egalitarianism that is gaining ground in the realm of extramarital sexual relations. For whilst male infidelity is morally equivalent to that of women, it is far from having the same bio-social consequences. An unfaithful wife may introduce foreign genes—and even genes of inferior quality—into the lineage. The single mother, for her part, heads an incomplete household and, consequently, one with unsatisfactory functional activities.

The associative nature of the contemporary family logically calls into question the very existence of the group. Of the decisions taken jointly by husband and wife, the most important is that which concerns the continuation of the marital bond. The family survives as long as the spouses deem it appropriate and dissolves in the event of disagreement, with each of the 'partners' being free to enter into a new marriage. The legalisation of divorce certainly encourages its spread by conferring a stamp of respectability on the illegitimate unions that are formed. But its systematic portrayal in film and television as a normal phenomenon has a far greater impact. The enactment of the divorce law in 1791 led to some ten thousand applications in France out of five million families, or 0.2 per cent, whereas in Italy, a country whose legislation does not permit the dissolution of the marital bond, the number of illegitimate biosocial groups is currently estimated (1968) at one million (10
%) of the number of illegitimate biosocial groups.

It is the law, on the contrary, that has brought about the disintegration of the family-trunk in those regions that apply Napoleonic civil law. The compulsory division of the estate and the abolition of primogeniture have destroyed the material foundations of its unity. Consanguineous marital families lack a point of reference and a head. Each is left to its own devices, and its fate depends, as we have seen, on the free decision of its members. Thus, a natural, organic group has gradually been transformed into a juxtaposition of unstable, non-hierarchical associations.

176. The mass school.

As an extension of the family in the educational sphere, the school (see Paragraph 47) could not remain untouched by the process of disintegration brought about by egalitarian individualism. It receives, in effect, children reduced to mere 'schemes', whose respective social backgrounds and hereditary endowments it refuses to take into account, and moulds them with a view to their integration into mass society. It treats them as if they were orphans destined to die unmarried, to use Renan's apt expression. Thus, the school, at all levels, provides pupils with a disembodied and therefore unrealistic education that contributes to breaking down and conditioning the individual.

The solid cultural traditions of the West meant that, in our time, the task of disintegration had to be carried out in several stages. The first consisted of the standardisation of school curricula. In the nineteenth century – which is drawing to a close,

From a sociological perspective, with the outbreak of the 1914 war – all pupils in primary and secondary education received exactly the same education, regardless of their respective backgrounds and future prospects, based solely on the exercise of reason. This effectively ruled out the education of sensitivity and character, which was impossible to impart in a schematic manner, at least with the means available at the time. Subsequently, rationalist teaching has been gradually replaced, at least in primary education, by a much more effective form of imaginative conditioning, as it allows for the encompassing of all aspects of the human personality. This shift in approach is evident even in the field of literacy, where various 'holistic' methods are increasingly replacing the old system based on the logical association of letters and words.

The demands of industrialisation in the 20th century, and particularly since the Second World War, made it necessary to supplement educational standardisation with specialisation—introduced at secondary and higher education levels—in order to train the technicians essential for experimentation and production. Adolescents, already conditioned to function as part of the masses, are thus provided with a strictly limited set of knowledge that inevitably pigeonholes them within the social complex. Standardised schooling prepared the child for the herd-like masses. Narrow specialisation integrates them into the anthill-like masses.

The dual process we have just analysed concerns methods alone and can be carried out, as is the case in Soviet countries, within the structured framework of the traditional school. However, we should not be surprised that the disintegrating spread of egalitarian individualism has repercussions on the educational groups responsible for it. In the liberal world, which at present resembles a flock rather than an anthill, the school is becoming increasingly lax as a result of its own actions. The educator relinquishes his role as the adult leader and acts childishly in order to be accepted as an 'older brother' by the children. Discipline disappears. Pupils are allowed to do as they please, on the pretext of not infringing on their personality. It is obvious that under such conditions, children imitate one another and become homogenised at their own level. The so-called 'active' school fosters the anarchic passivity of the pupil. It is not even fit for training robots.

177. The subjugated workshop.

The breakdown of the workshop (see Paragraph 48) takes place in a manner entirely different from that which we have described for the family and the school. It is obvious, in fact, that if its functional order were to disappear, the enterprise would no longer be in a position to produce. When, at the end of the 18th century, the bourgeoisie succeeded in removing the obstacles placed by the guilds on wage labour and established manufacturing enterprises, it had to provide these with the structures required by production itself, that is, those which organised the artisanal workshop. However, the socio-economic unit undergoes a substantial transformation and, despite certain appearances, suffers a profound internal weakening. Manufacture, in fact, requires machinery that demands a monetary capital disproportionate to that represented by the modest ins-

the tools of the pre-capitalist workshop. A new element then supersedes the collective and hierarchically organised producers: the owner of the tools rendered indispensable by mechanisation. The master craftsman is succeeded by the employer. The strictly contractual relationships of the factory replace the communal bonds of the workshop. The boss is no longer the one who knows the most, but the one who owns expensive machines, now indispensable for production. He still resembles the craftsman in that he is the necessary managerial element of the enterprise, thus representing a human value. But the enterprise itself now has nothing but economic value. A shared interest in the smooth running of the whole may well persist to some extent; it is, however, stifled by the worker's situation of absolute dependence on the owner of his tools. It is no longer a matter of an exchange of services between them, but of a contract of hire subject to the 'law' of supply and demand: either the wage earner accepts the conditions imposed by the employer, or he starves.

The capitalist enterprise thus bears far more resemblance to a gang of convicts under the command of a prison guard than to a community of producers. The situation is set to worsen further with its transformation into a financial enterprise. Indeed, the time comes when the factory requires machinery that is too complex and numerous to be owned by a single individual. Joint-stock companies are then formed, which become the owners of the means of production, and the head of the company, though privileged because he is difficult to replace, is reduced to the rank of a wage earner. A split thus occurs between the 'real enterprise' – the collective of producers organised hierarchically – and the 'legal enterprise' – the collective of capital owners. The entire organic group comes to be exploited by a minority alien to its operations, without its various elements realising their de facto solidarity. Needless to say, the situation does not change simply because the nature of the exploiting minority changes, and the workshop is just as subjugated under state capitalism as it is under liberal capitalism. In both cases, the group's structures are weakened by the action of a parasite that imposes its pathological authority upon the organic needs of production.

173. The mass army.

Egalitarian individualism has a very different impact on the structures of the Armed Forces. On the surface, there appear to be no significant changes: functional differentiation is maintained and even increases with technological advancement, whilst discipline remains the basic principle of the necessary order. However, the replacement, at the end of the 18th century, of the professional soldier by the conscript brings about a profound transformation of the army.

At first glance, compulsory military service appears to revive the old militia system (see paragraph 49). In fact, the situation is entirely different. The bourgeois of the Middle Ages was a civilian who, as such, took up arms in an emergency and, whilst he was able to do so, prepared himself for

such an eventuality. The conscript, on the other hand, loses his status as a free man upon joining the army, in times of peace as well as in times of war, without thereby acquiring the privileges – rights and obligations – inherent to military service. He is, therefore, a civilian with diminished rights. On the other hand, the militiaman trained and fought in his own town, performed a military role modelled on his professional role, and often the military structure encompassing him merged with the civilian structure of his daily life. Whereas the conscript is torn from his social context and forcibly incorporated into a unit, entirely alien to his normal life, which absorbs and depersonalises him through the imposition of an irrational discipline that seeks only to instil in him a series of conditioned reflexes.

Conscription thus gives rise to the mass army: a properly organised flock whose members act without any initiative, conditioned physically and mentally for collective manoeuvres. Number thus becomes a fundamental factor in victory, provided that enemy forces are organised according to the same principle. The Second World War demonstrated that the mass army could not withstand the onslaught of small, selected units, armoured divisions or mere commandos, and subsequent colonial wars amply confirmed this. Hence, the major military powers have backtracked. They retain conscripted troops intended to hold positions and territories, but they form and train shock forces – often professional or volunteer – of high operational effectiveness. In this respect, therefore, mass mobilisation is on the wane. It should be noted that its effects had never manifested themselves in the navy or the air force, as this was prevented by the technical specialisation required for the operation of ships and aircraft.

This gradual return to military professionalism renders even more absurd the theory of the 'citizen army' championed today by certain backward-looking American theorists, a theory which was put into practice – albeit briefly and with disastrous consequences – in post-war West Germany. To regard the soldier as a kind of public servant who, outside his hours of service, enjoys all the privileges of civilian life, robs military discipline of the rigour without which it is ineffective. The characteristics of the soldier and those of the civilian are, moreover, so different and even so opposed that there is no prospect of reconciling them in a single individual.

179. The amorphous church.

The armed forces are able to respond to the effects of massification not only because the negative consequences of this phenomenon are as immediate as they are evident, but also because their organisation is coercive. Church structures, by contrast, have the least visible impact on individual lives, and their continued existence depends on the consensus of the faithful. It is hardly surprising, then, that egalitarian individualism has effectively undermined them.

Every organised church has a hierarchical structure (see Paragraph 62) based on the relationships between the clergy and the lay faithful. The priest rules in the name of God. It is upon him that the dissemination and inviolability of dogma, and the observance of the rituals that periodically bring the faithful together in collective ceremonies, depend. If his authority is eroded by egalitarian ideas, dogma becomes subject to individual interpretations and loses its coherence, whilst the liturgy is simplified to the point of disappearing as a unifying factor for church groups, which tend to become mere associations. Religious life retreats into the individual conscience. The only thing that may remain in the social sphere is a vague superstructure made up of relaxed and often perverted beliefs, of superstitions that have been quick to take the place of dogma and ritual, and of a fading sentimentality.

There is no shortage of historical examples of such a process of disintegration, which befell both Vedaism and the paganism of our ancient world. But the most illustrative case, and the one closest to us, is that of Protestantism in its various forms. The preaching of the Reformers and the support given to Luther by certain princes eager to free themselves from Roman authority, and to Calvin by the bourgeoisie (in the modern sense of the word) in search of the economic and social freedom denied them by both the prevailing political order and Catholic morality, meant that, in some countries, the ecclesiastical hierarchy to lose both its priestly character and its hierarchical structure. In Lutheran countries and in England, the minister of worship became a mere public servant devoid of any authority other than that derived from his own personality. In Calvinist countries, the pastor was now nothing more than the president of a kind of religious association, very different from the traditional parish. Since the Reformation, dogma and morality have gradually relaxed and sects have multiplied within the Protestant world, which today finds itself in a state of complete disintegration.

The Catholic Church itself has been losing ground, particularly since the Second Vatican Council, relinquishing its dogmatic rigour, its uncompromising authoritarianism and its unifying liturgy. The process of disintegration is well under way, and history shows us that there is very little chance of turning back the clock in this regard.

180. A divided state and a fragmented community.

We have seen above (Paragraph 172) that a weak state tends to encourage massification in order to maintain an authority it would be unable to impose on powerful intermediate communities. This phenomenon occurs when the governing body of the community is unable to fulfil its functions satisfactorily. Sometimes, though not always, the illegitimate state suffers, as a group, the consequences of the social disintegration it provokes. Its weakness stems, in the immediate term, from unsatisfactory structures that undermine its essential unity. Such is the case with the democratic state, divided by virtue of the institutional principle according to which the three powers – executive, legislative and judicial – must

act independently of one another, without subordination of any kind.

The separation of powers constitutes, on the part of the liberal bourgeoisie, a precautionary measure designed to prevent the state it controls from gaining independence through the functional assertion of its communal role, which has not entirely disappeared. Thanks to this, in effect, any political act depends on an agreement, or more often a compromise, between parliament (for greater security generally divided into two chambers), the repository of legislative power, and the government, holder of the misnamed executive power. And that act is subject to the rulings of a body of magistrates, holders of judicial power whose members are irremovable. There can, therefore, be no rigour whatsoever in either the decision or its execution.

For its well-meaning advocates, such a disintegration of the State can only be explained by the false theory of social equilibrium. If the governing body of the Community is nothing more than the arbiter of conflicting forces, its division is a guarantee of impartiality. But this is to treat historical evolution as the result of a mere compromise between the driving forces of society, without acknowledging that society itself has an independent existence. Under such conditions, evidently, the State has nothing to govern for the simple reason that the Community has no existence outside its constituent parts. Which is not accurate, as we saw in Chapter XII.

The party system, which divides the legislative chambers among representatives of particular interests and opinions, further exacerbates the disintegration of the democratic state. Torn between rival factions of the ruling oligarchy and subjected to pressure from electoral forces of various origins, the executive branch is incapable of any sustained action. It is at the mercy of events and the repercussions those events have on the interests and sentiments of the electorate. Instability reaches its peak when the government emerges from a party-based parliament to which it is accountable, as is the case under a parliamentary system. But even when this is not the case, the separation of powers and the party system rob the state of its unity and, consequently, its functional capacity.

Thus weakened, the State has no choice but to weaken in turn the intermediate communities, which it is unable to dominate. Unable to harness the internal forces of society to bring about their synthesis, it seizes control of them and subjugates them. It directly directs the intermediate communities – before dissolving or dividing them – within the sphere of their respective activities, appointing their authorities and denying them their privileges. Such centralisation thus tends to create a monolithic and uniform Community, impoverished by the suppression of its internal diversity, and to destroy its constituent elements, which by nature possess a life of their own, with their corresponding rights and obligations. From a social point of view, it is detrimental, as it eliminates all intermediate life between that of the

the individual and the state, and to turn the collective body into a herd or an anthill. From a political point of view, this is counterproductive because it deprives the state of the forces drawn from intermediate communities, which are essential for the outcome of the communal synthesis to be powerful.

181. Social class.

The structural disintegration of groups and communities, the main aspects of which we have just analysed, has a direct impact on social stratification. The weakening of the organic order effectively causes the function on which the social stratum is based (see Paragraph 65) to lose its validity as a factor of horizontal differentiation. Mass society refuses to take into account the particular characteristics of individuals, whom it regards as interchangeable units. But this does not mean that inequalities disappear: they merely cease to be regulated by the Community and thus acquire complete freedom of expression. The physically strongest may then band together to impose despotic authority on the herd, or the wealthiest to subjugate and exploit the producers. In the first case, a Praetorian ruling minority is formed; in the second, an oligarchic social class.

Class is, in effect, a social stratum defined by the economic position of its members: the only type of stratum in which status is not conferred – at least in theory – on the basis of ability, but rather as a consequence of a factor unrelated to any organic fit. Whilst there were social classes in other eras – the *equites* of the late Roman Empire, for example – it is in the liberal world of the last two hundred years that the phenomenon occurs in its most pronounced and, therefore, most pathological form. Until the end of the 18th century, the bourgeoisie consisted merely of small, marginal groups of major merchants and moneylenders. By taking control of the state, it removed the political, guild-based and religious obstacles imposed on the use of money as an instrument for the exploitation of others' labour and as a source of power. It thus became a social class, characterised by the ownership of capital—that is, the means of production—which its members do not use, but which others need in order to live [13], and furthermore an illegitimate ruling class. [14] The emergence of the bourgeois class automatically led to the emergence of the proletariat, a class made up of workers who do not possess the tools without which they cannot produce, and therefore cannot survive, nor dispose of the fruits of their labour, and whose labour is bought, as if it were a commodity, by the owners of capital.

Among the antagonistic classes we have just defined are the so-called 'middle classes', which do not constitute classes – let alone a single class – in the sense

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13)- Cf. Mahieu, Jaime María de, *La economía comunitaria*, Ed. Universidad Argentina de Ciencias Sociales, Buenos Aires, 1964

14)- Cf. Mahieu, Jaime María de, *El Estado comunitario*, Ed. Arayú, Buenos Aires, 1962.

in the strict sense of the word. Its members do not, in fact, generally occupy any defined position with regard to the means of production. Their only common characteristic is a negative one: they are neither bourgeois nor proletarian. This is a heterogeneous conglomerate – artisans and traders with their own capital, independent professionals, farmers, civil servants and wage earners who technically form part of the proletariat but who are not to be confused with it on account of their cultural level or, quite simply, their customs – which constitutes the dregs of an imperfect system.

182. The usurping ruling minority.

In today's demoplutocratic society, the bourgeois class gives rise to an oligarchic ruling minority which holds the political levers of power in its hands. This minority finds itself, in relation to the class from which it springs, in a position that is fundamentally different from that occupied by the aristocratic ruling minority (see Paragraph 72) in relation to the social stratum on which it rests. Indeed, the oligarchy undoubtedly constitutes, for the state, just as the aristocracy does, a reserve of personnel. But it is not the state that recruits rulers and senior administrative officials from within its ranks. On the contrary, it is the oligarchy that delegates, more or less directly, some of its members or paid mercenaries to occupy positions of political command. To put it another way, whilst the aristocratic ruling minority dominates the social stratum from which it recruits, the oligarchic ruling minority is subject to the orders of the social stratum that has made it its agent.

The same distinction is evident with regard to their position within society. The oligarchy is not a natural intermediary between the State and the rest of the community. Firstly, because it runs the State, but also because its power is illegitimate. The social authority of the bourgeoisie is not, in fact, the result of the biopsychic capacity of its members. Nor does it stem from the performance of an organic function. For it is the producer who fulfils the economic function, not the owner of the machines that the producer uses. Hence the bourgeois hierarchy is endured rather than accepted by the population and, above all, by the proletariat, which suffers it most directly and severely.

The reaction against the capitalist regime may originate from a revolutionary leading minority (see Paragraph 72). It may also be, as in Russia during the first decade of the Soviet regime – before the dictatorship of the proletariat became a technocratic system – merely an aspect of the class struggle (see Paragraph 158). A leading group delegated by the working class – which does not necessarily mean elected by it – replaces the leading group delegated by the bourgeoisie. In both cases, real power is of an economic nature and belongs to a ruling class that uses the state for its own ends.

The technocratic ruling minority is of an entirely different nature. Its members are recruited through competitive selection or co-optation. They are technical experts, competent within a narrowly defined field, but lacking in an overarching political vision and leadership skills. When faced with a weak government, as is the case in a democratic regime, they tend to impose themselves upon it and gradually succeed in displacing the oligarchic minority precisely because of the complexity of a task for which that oligarchic minority is clearly unprepared. Technical administration thus gradually seizes political power. It even manages to absorb the government, whose members then emerge from its ranks, as happened in Soviet Russia. The administrative and the political become confused, not in their functions, which remain separate, but in their personnel. The State thus becomes an immense, rationalised, irresponsible and systematic machine, in which authority no longer derives from ability but from appointment. It is reduced to a mere sum of fragmentary technical functions, with no guiding principle to ensure its unity or purpose.

183. Pressure groups and power factors.

Whatever its cause, the weakening of political power [15] gives rise to a phenomenon that contributes significantly to structural disintegration and which we cannot fail to mention here, even though it belongs more to the field of political science than to that of sociology: the abusive projection of internal forces, whether organic or pathological, which partially escape the organic synthesis and seek to use the State for their own ends.

It is the natural tendency of every social entity to assert itself and project itself with all its might into the surrounding environment. Normally, the antagonisms provoked by such dynamism are overcome, at the level of the Community, by the State insofar as it performs its function of synthesis. In this case, each social entity is kept in its proper place and the State acts independently, on behalf of the whole organism. When the governing body of the social body weakens, the balance of power that ensures the validity of its authority is sometimes reversed. This or that constituent element of the Community may then come to impose its will—that is to say, its interests—on the State itself, turning it to some extent into its instrument. The blame lies not with the social entity, which, in becoming a force of pressure, is merely responding to its own dynamic nature, but with the State, which proves incapable of performing one of its essential functions. This responsibility is even more glaring when the force in question stems from one of the so-called factors of power, that is to say, from one of the instruments the State requires to fulfil one – or several – of its functions: the armed forces, the police, the judiciary, etc. It is normal, however, that the factors of power, faced with the weakening of the body of which they form part, tend to fill the political vacuum thus created

[15])- See Mahieu, Jaime María de, op. cit.

and to seize control. They may be manipulated for this purpose by some pressure group of a different nature. Such a process is revolutionary if the movement's aim is to restore the State's full autonomy and power. It is subversive if the power-wielding entity acts for its own benefit or that of others, or simply assumes functions that do not belong to it and for which it is not qualified.

It should be noted that the expression 'pressure group', commonly used in contemporary journalism when referring to pressure forces, is incorrect due to the restrictive meaning the word 'group' has in sociology (see Paragraph 40).

XVIII DEMOLITIONAL CHAOS

184. Depopulation

Egalitarian individualism not only tends towards structural disintegration, as we saw in the previous chapter, but also has a powerful and negative impact on the 'raw material' of human communities. It does so both directly, by asserting the primacy of the individual-schema over the groups and communities of which it is a part, and indirectly, by undermining the natural social order that real individuals need in order to come into being and develop fully.

To begin with, to give birth. If social atomisation were to reach its peak, sexual relations would disappear and, with them, procreation. It is difficult, if not impossible, for things to reach such an extreme, because such relations stem from a fundamental instinct that only a few individuals manage to suppress. But human beings, unlike other animals, have the ability to nullify the natural consequences of sexual intercourse. It is therefore up to the members of the couple whether or not to have children, and their decision on the matter stems from the struggle between individual selfishness and the forces through which social interest manifests itself. Some of these forces are undoubtedly of a superstructural nature. One cannot deny the influence that social pressures of an ethical-religious nature have on the birth rate. The comparison between Catholic and Protestant countries is illustrative in this regard, and the steady percentage increase in the French-speaking population of Canada provides us with an indisputable example of the phenomenon. Nor should the impact of living conditions be underestimated, as amply demonstrated by the results achieved through their improvement in Italy and Germany before the Second World War and in France thereafter. However, the factors in question are effective only within the framework of the biosocial group. If this group disintegrates, the birth rate falls or, at the very least, remains at a lower level than that which would be achieved with a stable family.

A decline in the birth rate is not in itself a negative development, even if its causes are. It may, in fact, restore the population density of-

optimal population level (see Paragraph 81) where this has been exceeded. However, it may also lead to depopulation, either absolute or relative: absolute when the population size decreases; relative when its growth is insufficient to achieve the density required for technological advancement or to withstand the pressure exerted in this field (see Paragraph 87) by another people. It should be noted that statistics do not always accurately reflect the situation. In today's white world, the birth rate is falling or, at the very least, has stabilised at a very low level, yet the population remains stable and is even growing slightly due to the rapid increase in average human life expectancy. There are, at least in percentage terms, fewer and fewer children and more and more elderly people: the age pyramid is tending to invert.

Let us, therefore, clearly distinguish between depopulation and underpopulation. The latter is, in fact, merely a factual state of affairs, which is in itself neutral from a value-judgemental perspective. Sometimes a consequence of depopulation, in other cases it coexists with a high birth rate, as happens when a community is progressing towards its optimal population density. But it may also be the case that depopulation occurs alongside numerical growth due to demographic ageing caused by an artificial increase in the average age. Needless to say, the worst scenario occurs when, as in Argentina today, a very low birth rate, a population density far below what it ought to be, and an ageing population are all observed simultaneously.

185. Overpopulation.

Depopulation is even compatible with overpopulation, for which it constitutes the worst remedy, albeit the only one accepted by the contemporary customs of civilised peoples. Faced with excessive population density, there are in fact only two solutions: birth control or the elimination of harmful or merely useless elements. Modern medicine strives to counteract the beneficial effects of natural selection, to which demographic equilibrium was largely attributable in times past (see Paragraph 82). Not only does the human being, on average, live for an ever-increasing number of years – and, consequently, endure ever-longer periods of senility – but individuals who are inferior in every respect, and even veritable biopsychic remnants, if not outright monsters, are kept artificially alive. When the territory reaches its saturation point, or simply when the social burden represented by the passive population thus increased proves incompatible with the desired standard of living, efforts are made – and succeeded in – to reduce the number of births through contraceptive measures and even through the legalisation of abortion. Depopulation is underway.

A detestable remedy for a very real problem: overpopulation does indeed cause a state of suffocation, with highly negative consequences, within the community affected by it. From a technical standpoint, a territory can sustain no more than a certain number of people. It is true that this number—

In civilised countries, productivity is constantly increasing through the application of new inventions to agricultural and industrial production. However, such inventions require an ever-higher level of technical expertise, which is accompanied by an ever-higher standard of living and, consequently, by ever-greater demands for consumption. On the other hand, in today's capitalist world, the satisfaction of needs is not merely a function of availability but also, and above all, of the consumer's solvency. It is common to see individuals starving to death beside warehouses brimming with unsold goods, or freezing to death beside empty houses. And what is true of individuals is even more so of entire peoples. In short, population control, though ill-conceived yet effective in the short term, benefits precisely those countries with the greatest technical resources. The white world maintains its balance and even still has vast underpopulated territories at its disposal. Highly industrialised Japan has managed to halt – albeit through misguided measures – its population growth. But India and China, with their very low technical standards, suffer the effects of growing overpopulation, with the temptation, for the latter of these powers, of underpopulated Siberia, which constitutes the logical extension of its living space.

The ill-conceived fight against overpopulation thus entails consequences more serious than the problem itself. Peoples with greater creative capacity are declining in both quality and quantity, whilst the others maintain their bio-psychic level through natural selection and begin to exert demographic pressure on their neighbours, which may give rise to conflicts that are dangerous for the white world.

186. Overconcentration.

The relationship we have just mentioned between depopulation and overpopulation always occurs in cities that grow to an excessive size. At first glance, this latter concept is not easy to define precisely. It is obvious that the criterion of optimal population density (see Paragraph 81), which applies to self-sufficient territories, is not applicable to large population centres, since these complement rural areas that provide them with the resources they need in terms of foodstuffs and raw materials. However, the city, as such, has its own requirements, the degree to which these are met serving as a basis for determining its normal maximum size: those relating to space – built-up and open – on the one hand, and social connections on the other. Urban overpopulation, and therefore demographic overcrowding, occurs when there is a shortage of sufficiently spacious housing and open spaces that are satisfactory from a health perspective. It also occurs when the number of inhabitants leads to overcrowding.

That said, an excessively large city always suffers from depopulation. Urban life always hinders reproduction because it pits the inherent selfishness of human beings against the birth of a child. A peasant does not need a strong sense of social responsibility or high moral standards in order to have a large family:

His self-interest leads him to have children, for a child whose upkeep costs him nothing represents, for him, the guarantee of future support. The city-dweller, on the other hand, must make immediate sacrifices with no hope of future reward. A large family is therefore the result of uncommon qualities or, conversely, of irresponsibility, if not of the inability – 'technical' or financial – to prevent births. In an overpopulated city, the lack of housing constitutes, for those social classes whose members have cultural and hygienic habits that make overcrowding intolerable, a powerful reason to avoid having children and even to shun marriage. The weakening of family structures, the main cause of overcrowding, reinforces the phenomenon.

There are several factors in today's big cities that have a negative impact on the cohesion of the biosocial group. The most significant is, without a doubt, the high cost of living, which forces women and children to contribute to the household income by taking on paid work that keeps them away from home. Increasing distances and the mismatch between work schedules and, eventually, study timetables further reduce the hours spent together. Finally, mass entertainment breaks down family unity on non-working days – the only ones left for shared family life – by drawing group members away individually. It is not only family structures that suffer. The big city minimises the validity of all social forms. In it, the individual finds himself alone. He goes home only to sleep, which prevents him from maintaining ongoing relationships with his neighbours, whose names he often does not know. He wastes hours every day travelling by train or bus alongside strangers. He frequently changes jobs and, consequently, bosses and colleagues, or deals with clients he has never seen before and will never see again. He goes to the cinema or the stadium – and even to church – and finds himself in the midst of an anonymous crowd. Perpetually tired and bad-tempered, the inhabitant of the big city is not even in a position to withstand the psychological pressure that the media exert on his mind. As he becomes increasingly de-socialised, he becomes increasingly de-personalised.

187. Racial mixing.

As we move from the quantitative to the qualitative, demographic problems become far more serious and their consequences are often irreversible. Such is the case with the most serious of these, miscegenation, that is, the biological mixing of two or more human groups of essentially distinct races.

Leaving aside all value judgements, our previous analyses (see Chapter IX) clearly demonstrate that miscegenation leads to an increase in the genetic pool of the ethnic group receiving foreign elements. The individuals comprising it are more diverse, and all the more so the further apart the original types were from one another. But what the community thus gains in variety, and consequently in at least theoretical possibilities, is counterbalanced by what it loses in stability and unity until it has regained its

Homogeneity. A homogeneous whole is focused on realising its true nature. It is self-aware. It is 'of one piece'. It possesses a clearly defined goal and an assertive will to power. The mixed group—not yet homogenised—is, on the contrary, torn between diverse and often contradictory aspirations. It becomes scattered and lax. It needs time to regain control of itself: precisely the time required for the reconstitution of its ethnic unity. Of course, the new race born of hybridisation, whatever its worth, is distinct from its two components. However, there are races whose principal distinctive characteristics are generally dominant and which thus possess the capacity to retain in a latent state some of the foreign genes that are incorporated into their genetic makeup through miscegenation. But such a property is exceptional and does not invalidate the general fact that mixed-race ethnic groups lose, at least initially, their harmony and cohesion along with their unity.

Inbreeding homogenisation does not, however, always succeed in bringing coherence to the racial group it unifies. Indeed, when the constituent elements of the mixture are very different, the process results in a hybrid race. The whole is homogeneous insofar as the average variation among its individual components does not exceed that found in the most established races. But each of these components lacks harmony, as if its parts were not made for one another.

Even if this latter phenomenon does not occur, interbreeding leads to genuine racial disintegration. The groups that mix lose, for a time, their homogeneity and stability. But they relinquish their respective 'ethnic identities' forever. It is, therefore, a leap into the unknown: we know what disappears; we do not know what will emerge from the process. In the best-case scenario, a Community of an inferior race (see Paragraph 95) will benefit, at least in the long run, from the introduction into its midst of genes of a higher qualitative standard. But a Community of a superior race will always be harmed by an influx of inferior blood. Miscegenation can produce 'hybrid' offspring through the activation of previously latent traits. Observation and historical analysis show us, however, that the fusion of two unequal ethnic groups has never given rise to a people that is qualitatively on a par with – let alone superior to – its highest-level constituent element.

188. Ethnic chaos.

Miscegenation is the inevitable consequence of any lasting contact between different racial groups when it is not prevented by psychosocial and/or legal norms. Egalitarian individualism encourages it by denying or, at the very least, dismissing all factors of qualitative differentiation among human beings and, consequently, by ignoring the influence of race on social relations. Not only does it condemn all discriminatory legislation, but it also promotes inorganic coexistence – the misnamed 'integration' – among members of groups

ethnic groups living side by side within the same territory. Racial consciousness gradually fades until it disappears, and the time comes when sexual unions take place entirely independently of racial considerations.

The *panmixia* thus brought about becomes all the more significant the greater the number of elements involved in the mixture. The process of homogenisation depends, in fact, on the prevalence of interracial unions and on the degree of affinity between the components of the primitive complex, but also on the number of distinct characteristics that must be combined in the genetic makeup of hybrid individuals. This is a problem of genetic mathematics which need not be discussed here. Let us confine ourselves to pointing out—as is evident without the need for complicated calculations—that the number of possible combinations increases with the number of elements involved in the mixture. Thus, a process of interbreeding between whites and blacks produces mulattos, whilst the mixing of whites, blacks and Indians produces mulattos, 'pardos' (mestizos of whites and Indians) and zambos (mestizos of blacks and Indians), with all the variations that arise in each group according to Mendel's laws.

Thus, the *intermingling* of different ethnic groups gives rise to so many distinct human types that the people affected by it lose their unity and character; the formation of a new race is a very slow process when the constituent elements are few, and almost impossible when they are many. In the latter case, ethnic chaos ensues, of which Imperial Rome in its final centuries provides a very illustrative example. From all the provinces conquered by the legions, including and above all the Asian and African provinces, slaves of the most diverse races had been sent to Italy. Their gradual emancipation, alongside the physical destruction of the Roman aristocracy in foreign and civil wars, fundamentally transformed the ethnic fabric of the peninsula. Caracalla's edict, by granting citizenship to all the inhabitants of the empire, brought new contingents of the widest racial variety to Rome. Italy thus became the *cloaca gentium,* as Chamberlain rightly puts it, [16] and the metropolis rapidly lost the political capacity—in the broadest sense of the word—that stemmed from the qualities of its original race.

The factors that led to ethnic chaos in Rome are re-emerging in our own time. If the process of widespread miscegenation currently underway is not halted without delay, the *grey world* of tomorrow will ensure the fulfilment of Gobineau's sinister prophecy: 'Nations—no, human herds—crushed under a gloomy lethargy, will then live in a stupor of their own nullity,

16)- Cf. Chamberlain, Houston Stewart, *La genèse du XIXe siècle*, French edition, Librairie Payot et Cie, Paris, 1913

like buffaloes ruminating in the putrid pools of the Pontine Marshes" [17].

189. Genetic mixing.

There is no mystery about the negative consequences of *panmixia*. On the one hand, the coherent development of any human group depends on its biopsychic unity. On the other hand, interbreeding between unequal races lowers the standard of the superior component. In short, the worth of any people stems from a differentiation that mixing eliminates. Only the self-serving dissemination of the tenets of egalitarian individualism can explain why one comes to deny, in the case of men, what no one questions regarding dogs or horses. It is not because they resemble all other members of their respective species that the German Shepherd and the thoroughbred are unanimously regarded as noble animals, but, on the contrary, because they possess, to a high degree, distinctive traits that make them, from a certain point of view, superior to their peers; that is to say, because they belong to clearly differentiated breeds that have emerged from long hereditary processes.

The above applies equally to the lineages and strata into which the Community is divided. The specialisation and quality of these groups stem from heredity and can only be preserved through homogamy, in the first case, and endogamy, in the second, always with the openness required by the selective absorption of individuals of ascending or descending lineage. If sexual unions cease to take place within these distinct frameworks, genetic mixing occurs, which inevitably leads to widespread mediocrity. Individuals come to resemble one another more and more, generation after generation. From a qualitative point of view, the group tends towards a middle ground in which the brutes largely disappear, it is true, but also, if there are any, the *creators and the achievers* (see Paragraph 103). From a functional point of view, specialisation starts from an undifferentiated and, therefore, unprepared 'raw material': achieving it requires greater effort, and the level attained falls far short of that which can be obtained through prior hereditary development.

Genetic mixing leads directly to the herd – a community made up of identical individuals – or to the anthill, if functional differentiation is achieved through conditioned specialisation (see Note 191). When this occurs, as has been the case in the Western world for the past two hundred years, it erases the results of centuries-long – and sometimes millennia-long – processes of selective formation. The people who suffer from this are condemned to start, in every generation, from a *tabula rasa* without the advantages of biopsychic inheritance. Worse still: the distinctive characteristics of

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17) – Cf. Gobineau, Count Arthur de, *Essay on the Inequality of the Human Races*, Ed. Apolo, Barcelona, 1936

previous lineages and strata persist in part, albeit in a diminished form, in some individuals, yet are not taken into account when allocating social roles. The principle of hereditary differentiation may thus prove counterproductive by hindering the functional performance of those predisposed to activities different from those assigned to them.

This blurring of gender distinctions reaches its peak when the biological and psychological characteristics of the sexes are not even taken into account. When men perform tasks that require a feminine mindset, they become effeminate, and when women carry out roles that involve masculine traits, they become masculine. The blurring of gender differences encourages homosexuality, as we have seen over the past few decades, and may, in the long run, even jeopardise reproduction.

190. 'Equal opportunities'

If the respective hereditary endowments of individuals are considered equal, the only differences that manifest themselves between them are those arising from different personal developmental processes. All human beings are potentially capable of receiving any form of education and of performing any role. Any educational discrimination and any attempt to base an individual's social standing on supposed predisposing factors would violate the basic principles of egalitarian individualism. Hence the thesis that all individuals must be given "equal opportunities". The extent to which each person makes use of the identical opportunities provided by society will subsequently determine their position.

At first glance, the procedure is certainly appealing. It appears to satisfy our desire for justice. Is it not satisfying that any individual can, on the basis of their merits, attain the level commensurate with their ability, without anyone benefiting from undue privileges? Does this not ensure that the person holding each post is as suitable as possible? Two questions that require careful analysis.

We note, first of all, that true justice is neither individualistic nor egalitarian. It consists, in fact, in recognising – and satisfying, within existing possibilities – the needs that arise from the natural right of all social entities, whether individual or collective. And we know (see Chapter I) that the social naturally takes precedence over the individual. The family, and therefore the lineage, has rights just as much as the individual, and those rights are prior to and superior to those of the individual. Assigning a specific role to a family – or to any other collective social entity – does not violate but rather affirms the principle of justice. This, on the other hand, in no way demands that everyone be given the same as everyone else, but rather that they be provided, within the limits of what is available, with what corresponds to their own needs, which entails distributive inequality in all things in accordance with the realities expressed by natural law. From the perspective that concerns us in this section, the indivi-

The individual must, therefore, receive the necessary education to develop their potential to the full. A one-size-fits-all education inevitably settles for an average standard and is detrimental both to the more gifted, who cannot fulfil their potential, and to those less favoured by nature, who are unable to make the most of the education provided. Undifferentiated education, designed for unrealistic human models, prevents everyone from realising the 'different' potentials they possess—the very qualities that allow each individual, however limited their natural gifts, to excel in a particular role. If horse breeders refused to recognise the different hereditary aptitudes of thoroughbreds and Percherons and subjected them all to the same training, they would lower the standard of both: the thoroughbreds would fail to reach their maximum potential speed, and the Percherons their full potential strength.

'Equal opportunities' therefore tend to artificially standardise individuals, stifling all their distinctive abilities. It thus prevents the Community from benefiting from the inherited specialisation of its members and condemns it to having at its disposal only an inferior 'raw material'. On the other hand, how can one choose, from among supposedly equal individuals, those suited to particular roles? There is no alternative but to resort to the 'mandarinate' system. Indiscriminate candidates are subjected to a competitive examination—a test lasting a few hours on a specific subject—and are judged on the basis of the work they submit. In other words, only rote knowledge and, at best, intellectual abilities are taken into account. Other qualities play no part whatsoever, not even leadership skills when it comes to selecting managers. The 'mandarinate' thus leads to mediocrity and irresponsibility.

191. Conditional specialisation.

No egalitarian principle, as we have already had occasion to mention (see Paragraph 106), can completely override functional requirements. However much one may deny, in theory, any biopsychic differentiation of hereditary origin, reality dictates not only a certain selection of the individuals called upon to perform various social activities, but also a certain training of those chosen. But a good education can only be effective when applied to a properly selected human 'raw material', which is not the case with the competitive examination system. In the pre-liberal era, functional specialisation could be very broad for the prince or the craftsman, owing to a hereditary predisposition to acquire it. The former could master the science and art of political leadership as a whole, without prejudice to a solid general education. The latter produced, in all their various complementary aspects, works of art that demanded knowledge of multiple and varied techniques.

Clearly, it is not possible to provide such an open-minded education to an individual born of a genetic mix (see Paragraph 189) and poorly selected. However, it is possible to condition them in such a way that they carry out a task rigidly and satisfactorily – and

Just one – simple and unchanging. The prince gives way to the bureaucrat, who merely applies a few administrative rules mechanically, and the skilled craftsman is replaced by the Taylorist factory worker who, throughout the day, tightens an endless nut with a few automatic movements. The technician is born: that is, the man who knows everything within an extremely narrow field and knows almost nothing beyond the limits of his speciality, the final link towards the human robot. All qualitative strata (see Paragraph 103) suffer the degrading effects of such abusive technification, although, from a social point of view, individuals at the lowest level can, through conditioning, be put to useful employment, just as the squirrels were which, in Europe, not so long ago, operated the bellows of the forge. But this is a benefit that in no way compensates for the loss of the human characteristics possessed by nature even by brutes incapable of any development.

To put it another way, egalitarian individualism, having standardised the members of the Community as far as possible, differentiates them to the extreme on a very narrow point. All that remains is for the genetic mixing of *panmixia* to cease, and the herd will become an anthill through the fixation and hereditary transmission of the new traits acquired through automated specialisation. It is likely, moreover, that the so-called social insects acquired the unchanging structures that characterise their organisation in this way.

Apart from the possible future consequences of the current state of affairs, conditioned specialisation tragically lowers the level of civilisation in the contemporary world. The relaxation and disintegration of cultural forms (see Chapter XX) occurs as an inescapable result of the atomisation and mechanisation of social activities. Such a situation is not incompatible with technical progress and even favours it insofar as it allows for the participation of a greater number of highly specialised individuals in the tasks of research and production. But the capacity for synthesis is disappearing and, with it, authentic creation.

192. The survival of the weak.

Egalitarian individualism does not confine its negative impact to the herd-like behaviour and 'insectification' of the community. If all individuals are equal, none of them possesses natural rights that differ from those of any other – let alone rights superior to them – and there is therefore no basis whatsoever on which to make a qualitative choice. If, on the other hand, the individual is the end of society, he cannot legitimately be subordinated, either in his actions or, even less so, in his very existence, to the requirements of communal affirmation. It follows that a human being endowed with deficient hereditary traits or rendered inferior by some acquired defect that is biologically transmissible to his descendants has the same right to life and procreation as the superior man.

Until the last century, natural selection (see Note 112) led to the spontaneous elimination of the weak and a large proportion of the mentally disabled, sometimes supplemented by legal or customary measures such as the exposure of deformed newborns in ancient Greece. Today, scientific advances make it possible to artificially sustain the lives and reproductive capacity of biopsychologically inferior individuals, and it is becoming increasingly difficult to curb the role of medicine in this regard. Humanitarian sentimentality and ill-conceived charity cause public opinion to be moved by any form of inferiority, much like those spinster women who grow fond of mongrel dogs or cats and look upon purebred animals with hatred. The very same society that weakens superior individuals and lineages by every means at its disposal devotes its best efforts to the preservation of harmful elements that constitute a heavy burden in the present—which is of little consequence—but which, through their sexual activity, also harm the future. Keeping monsters or the incurably insane alive is inhumane, despite good intentions. Allowing morons to pass on their deficiencies to future generations is socially criminal, all the more so because the reproductive irresponsibility of such individuals makes them, in many cases, particularly prolific.

Only a few European nations and some US states permit the voluntary or compulsory sterilisation, by court order, of individuals affected by certain hereditary defects, as was practised, on a larger scale and in a more scientific manner, in Nazi Germany. This is, however, the only effective means of safeguarding the quality of a people's gene pool. To rely, as Carrel does [18]—who is otherwise so lucid in his analysis of the problem—on the self-restraint of individuals who, by their very condition, are unable to control themselves or, often, even to be aware of their actions, belongs to the realm of illusions fostered by individualism. The moral scruples that generally oppose sterilisation have the same origin and are, moreover, devoid of logic. For if the individual has a natural right to procreate, the child has a natural right to be born with a healthy genetic endowment.

193. Reverse selection.

Whilst striving to limit the effects of natural selection, the contemporary world practises, in various fields, a veritable reverse selection. Although less bloody, the wars of the past demanded physical and moral qualities, the absence of which meant certain death. They thus led to the elimination of the weakest elements, particularly among the nobility, which gained in vigour what it lost in numbers. Today's armed conflicts require ever less courage on the part of the combatants. Atrociously deadly, they claim the lives of the young above all

[18])- Cf. Carrel, Alexis: *The Unknown Man*, Joaquín Gil, Buenos Aires, 1946

which makes up the shock troops. Courage, in their case, is a death trap. The finest elements are sacrificed for the sake of the weak and the cowards who remain behind and, despite the aerial bombardments – the situation would be different in the event of a nuclear war – they face far fewer risks. Social subversion and the unrest that accompanies it have an even more obvious outcome. The aristocracy, the product of millennia of selection, is eliminated through slaughter, expulsion or the imposition of living conditions that bring about its rapid degeneration. Finally, civil war and, more generally, ideological war kill volunteers whose very presence on the front line attested to their moral qualities. Let us add to all this the counter-selection caused by celibacy for religious reasons – justified from another point of view – which prevents the reproduction of individuals of the highest moral and, often, intellectual calibre. This is likely to be the cause of Ireland's decline, which, in the Middle Ages, through its religious orders, was an exceptional centre of cultural creation and influence. Let us also mention the economic negative selection at work in the liberal-capitalist world, where money constitutes the criterion of social hierarchy, a point to which we shall return later (see Sections 195 to 199).

Closely linked to the 'reverse selection' whose key features we have just examined [19] is a phenomenon parallel to that observed in relation to the struggle of the races (see Note 99): the relative infertility of the upper classes compared with the high birth rates of the lower classes. It is an indisputable fact that families belonging to the ruling classes have, nowadays, few children. The material reasons for this deficiency are manifold: difficulties with housing and domestic service, the demands of a refined lifestyle, women's employment, etc.—in short, a lack of money. Let us add to this the fear of motherhood on the part of women who, even when not in employment, wish to step outside their natural role; the weakening of religious disciplines and traditions; and also the physiological degeneration caused by the urban environment. It is normal and necessary for the aristocracy, or, more generally, the ruling class, to incorporate the upstarts emerging from the *elites* of the lower classes. But it is harmful that, by their very
sterility, it has to absorb these very same *elites*. On the one hand, the renewal
is too rapid for the necessary assimilation of the rising elements to take place and, on the other, the intermediate communities are qualitatively impoverished and become 'herd-like', losing their natural leaders.

194. Impoverishing emigration and debasing immigration.

Added to the causes of demographic anomaly analysed above are migratory movements that harm the Community in terms of its demographic size and/or composition. There is scarcely any need to mention, as their negative effects are obvious, those that cause or exacerbate depopulation and the su-

19)- For a comprehensive analysis of the issue, see Vacher de Lapouge, **Les sélections* sociales*, Librairie Albert Fontemoing, Paris, 1897.

population. The qualitative consequences of certain human displacements, on the other hand, deserve our full attention.

For a country of emigration, the ideal would be to rid itself exclusively of inferior elements and, if possible, of their biopsychic residue. We already know that, generally speaking, when the main motive for emigration is demographic pressure, it is the maladjusted who leave—those who, to a greater or lesser extent, fit the criteria mentioned above—but also adventurers—in the etymological sense of the word—who belong, at least potentially, to the most capable strata of the population (see Paragraph 120). In fact, therefore, the qualitative composition of emigrants is not very different from that of the group from which they emerge, and the latter retains intact the numerical ratio existing between its strata of aptitude.

Ideological emigration, resulting from religious, political or cultural persecution, has very different consequences. It is, in fact, the most highly educated and capable individuals who leave, with a high proportion of leaders among them. The rest had either not committed themselves sufficiently to put their lives or freedom at risk, or lacked the necessary ability to escape. A community that thus loses part of its *elite* is qualitatively impoverished, to the benefit of the receiving countries. Such was the case with 17th-century France, which, with the emigration of the Huguenots, lost *creators and doers* (see Note 103) – aristocrats and artisans – who contributed powerfully to the development of Prussia, the Netherlands and South Africa. Similarly, the forced emigration of the 'whites' – that is to say, of almost the entire nobility that had survived the civil war – deprived Russia of a ruling class whose worth is demonstrated by the fact that many of its members settled into the upper strata of the communities that took them in. Even more serious is the emigration to the most industrialised countries of relatively high-level individuals from developing communities. Of the young Africans who go to study in Europe, few return to their homeland. And for several decades now, we have witnessed a systematic drain, by the United States, of Latin American professionals and technicians tempted by living conditions that their communities of origin imprudently deny them. Countries already poor for ethnic reasons or due to their previous mode of settlement are becoming even poorer.

The immigration of less capable individuals logically has the same consequences as the emigration of high-achieving individuals: it adversely affects the existing relationship between ability groups. The phenomenon becomes particularly visible when immigrants belong to fundamentally different races, as the qualitative problem is then compounded by those arising from the juxtaposition of heterogeneous ethnic groups (see Chapter IX and Paragraph 187). But an influx of inferior individuals of the same race also lowers the standard of the host population. Its consequences are not immediately apparent, as immigrants, upon arrival, settle in the lowest social strata, where their work is purely manual. Only after two or three generations does the in-

the incorporation of some of their descendants into the upper strata and even the ruling class, particularly in industrialising countries. The hereditary mass of the elites thus loses its potential, and the level of civilisation within the community declines, even as its level of technical development rises.

XIX INFRASTRUCTURAL USURPATION

195. The oligarchic regime

We saw in Chapter XV that the infrastructure—that is, the set of dynamic relationships that prevail in social evolution—naturally changes with circumstances, always subject to the political synthesis carried out by the State. We mentioned at the time that a pathological situation can arise when the predominant force, whatever it may be, comes to take control of the governing body of the Community, turning it into an instrument of its undue domination. What is abnormal is not that the economic, military, religious or ideological factor should, at a given moment, acquire the special importance conferred upon it by history – this is merely a de facto situation, satisfactory or not but inescapable – but rather that the section of the social body embodying it should impose its own guiding intent upon the whole.

Observation and historical analysis provide us with numerous examples of this phenomenon. The most recent example comes from the Western world in which we live. For almost two hundred years, in fact, and apart from brief intervals in certain communities, not only has the infrastructure of our social development been economic in nature, but we have also been subject to an oligarchic regime—that is to say, political control by the small minorities who hold the capital. Similar situations occurred in the past, and one need only mention Phoenicia or the Republic of Venice to recall well-known examples of mercantile states. These were, however, exceptions of considerable historical significance but very limited in scope, simply because, in the pre-liberal era, money could only become capital when applied to overseas commercial operations, which were in themselves very limited. By contrast, the conquest by the bourgeoisie, in the late 18th and early 19th centuries, of the traditional states of Western Europe imposed, directly or indirectly, a pathological economic infrastructure on almost the entire world.

The bourgeoisie, in the modern sense of the word, emerged from the 14th century onwards as marginal groups within communal society who were engaged in large-scale overseas trade and, clandestinely, in lending at interest. Its members, whether tolerated or persecuted, had grown rich without thereby gaining anything more than material comforts. With their money they could live better than many others, to the extent permitted by sumptuary laws, but could not acquire power or even respect. Hence their repeated attempts to take control of

the levers of power in their respective communities, first through usurious loans to princes—which led many to the stake, as happened to the Templars—and secondly through religious subversion, the failure of which nevertheless left them with important bases of operation: Geneva and the Netherlands. Finally, the widespread dissemination of liberal ideology enabled them, in 1789, to seize control of the French state and subsequently, by force or propaganda, of the other states of the Western world.

The bourgeoisie then adapted the structures of the Community's governing body to suit its own needs, turning it into an instrument of its own designs. Since the 'occupying forces' were divided into numerous competing groups due to their very mercantile nature, and in order to ensure that none of these groups could oust the others, the bourgeois oligarchy divided the State into three autonomous powers and made the most important public offices dependent on an individualistic and egalitarian electoral process.

Each group formed its own party. Initially restricted to the bourgeoisie through the census suffrage system, the right to vote was gradually extended as the people were indoctrinated through the monopoly on the media: the state-run, or at least state-controlled, school system and the press, which depended on money—an essential prerequisite for establishing and maintaining newspapers of any significance. Thus, since the misnamed 'French Revolution', wealth has constituted the most important source of political power, and the entire course of history has been dominated by the economic objective of the bourgeoisie: the return on capital.

196. The economic subjugation of the Community.

It is hardly surprising, under these conditions, that the capitalist system grants the bourgeois owners of the means of production incredible power. The inequality of returns logically stems from the inequality of men. It is in keeping with the natural order of society. In all systems, the boss, on whom the running and success of the enterprise for which he is responsible depends, consumes in some form a share of the output far exceeding the wage of a labourer. The leaders of the capitalist world are no exception to the rule.

It would certainly be more satisfying if luxury were reserved for geniuses and heroes. But, once the initial moment of irritation has passed, one has to realise that the share of surplus value taken from the producers and consumed by the masters of capitalist society is very small. Even if they wanted to, they could hardly increase it: there comes a point when the accumulation of wealth can no longer affect the standard of living because all the needs of its beneficiary have been satisfied. Where, then, does the difference disappear between the consumption of the owners of capital and the surplus value they hoard?

It is reinvested. Capital increases and, consequently, so does the income which the capitalist cannot consume and which he in turn reinvests. In other words, for every unit of income

consumed income remains stable, capitalised income increases, at least theoretically, without ceasing. The benefits the system affords to the owners of the means of production may be more or less legitimate depending on the actual role they play in their respective enterprises; in any case, this is of little consequence. What is serious is the power it grants them not only over the productive society but over the entire community. [20]

Because the community state has been 'taken over' by the oligarchy, the liberal regime is weak; and because it is weak, it fears any power that might slip from its grasp. It therefore, as we have already seen (Chapter XVII), sets about destroying organic social structures and preventing their reconstruction. The capitalist bourgeoisie imposes itself on the Community only to the extent that there are no longer any organised intermediate communities standing between it and the powerless individuals. Thus the State loses its character as the governing body of the Community. Disguised under the guise of traditional administration and concealed by an electoral system which it manipulates as it pleases and by every means, the oligarchy subjugates and exploits the Community like a colony, with no restrictions other than those imposed by the resistance of men and events. Every political decision is taken on the basis of economic interests, and its predominant cause is, therefore, of an economic nature. The historical purpose of society is pathologically supplanted by the lust for profit and power of a class (see Paragraph 181) that is itself pathological.

197. The economic subjugation of producers.

The first consequence of the triumph of the bourgeois oligarchy was the establishment of manufacturing industries. The craftsman of the pre-liberal era was a free man. He was a member of a guild that regulated his professional activity, but he participated as a partner in its decisions. The capital required for production consisted of his knowledge and skill. The few relatively inexpensive tools he needed were his own property. The worker under his command, usually in his own home, was nothing more than a senior apprentice who would in turn become a master when his abilities permitted. In the meantime, he was bound to the workshop, whose fortunes he shared just as a wife and child are bound to the family of which they form part.

The producer in the capitalist enterprise, by contrast, is nothing more than a wage-earner bound by an unwritten or written contract to the owner of the tools – which become increasingly expensive as mechanisation advances – which he vitally needs without being in a position to own them. For a certain sum of money, he supplies a certain amount of labour, and the sum of money granted to him is not determined according to his human worth, nor even according to the market value of his pro-

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20)- Cf. Mahieu, Jaime María de, *La economía comunitaria*, Ed. Universidad Argentina de Ciencias Sociales, Buenos Aires, 1964.

production, but rather on the basis of the supply and demand for labour. The worker's wage enables him to live more or less comfortably, that is to say, to remain in a state where he can produce and raise his children—in other words, to provide for his own replacement when he is 'worn out'. But the fruit of their labour belongs entirely to the capitalist, who disposes of it freely and retains the surplus value without having contributed in the slightest to its creation.

The organisation of a section of wage earners into trade unions and the struggle that has ensued have, over the past few decades, improved the material circumstances of workers. Reformist capitalism, as manifested particularly in the United States, has realised that it had to buy social peace through high wages and other benefits. It has managed to mitigate the effects of the system in order to preserve its principles. The worker, or at least the skilled worker in large factories, now enjoys a standard of living comparable to that of a member of the petty bourgeoisie. But his position within the company—that is to say, his position as a producer—has not changed. He continues to sell his labour: at best, he sells it at a higher price, and the surplus value continues to go entirely to the holders of capital.

However, the material conditions of the proletarian's existence do not constitute the most serious aspect of the problem. Without even mentioning the monk or the intellectual, for example, and taking their needs into account, they often live in worse conditions than the worker. It is not unusual, nowadays, to see engineers earning less than dockers. But the engineer is not, in moral terms, a proletarian because he is part of, and feels himself to be part of, the community into which he is integrated. Lacking economic wealth, he shares in its cultural heritage. That is to say that, apart from the life of a producer which makes him a proletarian, he leads a life as a citizen, in the broadest sense of the word. He often suffers more than the worker from capitalist exploitation, but he is not cut off from the Community because the factory is not the sole framework of his existence. The true proletarian is a stranger in the society of which he forms part and which, materially, he sustains. Save for a few diversions, generally of a low order, he lives in his trade, by his trade and for his trade. The company constitutes his social framework. But nothing binds him to the company: he neither owns it nor is he owned by it.

198. The trade union.

The establishment of the capitalist system brutally destroyed age-old structures. Accustomed to living within a closely knit and strictly regulated community, the proletarian suddenly found himself isolated and defenceless in the hostile factory, facing a boss on whom his livelihood and that of his family depended. He was not permitted any defiance, as labour was plentiful: anyone who protested would have ended up on the street. Only gradually did solidarity among workmates revive, limited, of course, to the workers themselves, as the management staff felt bound to the employer by the privileged position he granted them. For that very reason, such solidarity could not manifest itself within the company: the producers who collaborated—

Workers who were employed by the same company and whose collaboration was essential to the production of the manufactured goods were at odds with one another on a social level, whilst workers from various competing firms felt united by their shared fate within a framework that corresponded to the old guild boundaries. Later, as a result of socialist propaganda, the proletariat became aware of its unity within the nation and, to a certain extent, beyond the nation.

The class thus replaced the workshop and the trade in the workers' concerns. For the wage earner, the company was now merely the setting for his exploitation, whilst the class constituted the setting for his defence. In other words, their status as proletarians took precedence over their role as producers. Hence, the professional associations that were being reconstituted were not based on the realities of production but on the needs of the struggle for the abolition or improvement of the proletarian condition.

In the capitalist world, the trade union serves the needs of legitimate self-defence and is, therefore, an association based on natural law. The isolated proletarian is at the mercy of his employer. The guild, moreover dissolved by the 'occupied' State, no longer makes sense, since the very structure of capitalist society imposes the division of the various human elements of production into opposing factions. The enterprise is no longer a homogeneous, hierarchical social unit but a contractual union—and consequently one limited in time—of individuals brought together solely by necessity and who constantly tend to oppose one another, not out of any particular antipathy but by virtue of the very law governing their collaboration. The trade union phenomenon has therefore arisen from the working and living conditions imposed on the producer by liberal society. The trade union, in the new sense of the word, brings together those workers whom the proletarian condition turns into outcasts, separating them from the body of the Community, and whose only option is to unite in defence of what the famous Le Chapelier Act—which in 1790 banned the French guilds—called 'their supposed common interests'.

Far from being surprised by the inorganic nature of trade unions—for whose members social, political, geographical and even professional frameworks hold only relative value—it is worth noting that this is a logical consequence of egalitarian individualism. The struggle waged by the guild, when it was still in existence, was intended to strengthen—and did strengthen—the community of producers it constituted. The trade union, on the contrary, by its very constitution breaks up the unity—achieved through compulsion but real and effective—of the factory. It is made up of individuals torn from their natural setting and their role, just as an army does. Hence its military structure, which responds exclusively to the needs of the class war. However, the combat groups of the trade union militia are not formed at random within the proletariat. They are embedded within the functional framework of the trade. They do not express the interests and hopes of the working-class mass as created by capitalist society, but rather those of factions that

What they have in common, apart from the living conditions imposed by the suburbs, is the training they have received in the practice of a particular profession. To put it another way: the trade union is not a community, since it lacks an organic function, but it constitutes a legitimate defence, within the class-based and therefore pathological structure that capitalism imposes on producers, against atomisation and massification. The unionised proletarian is not yet integrated into the Community. But, at the very least, he is already part of an organised proletariat.

199. Supracommunal finance.

Having been established with relative ease in industrialised countries and subsequently extended to raw material-producing regions, capitalist exploitation could not—and evidently still cannot—be confined by national borders. Closely bound by the demands of trade and its financing, national oligarchies depend on the major banking institutions that operate on a global scale. No company today can develop without resorting to credit, and those of a certain size must, moreover, constantly increase their capital through appeals to public savings, largely concentrated in the banks. Supranational finance is thus in a position to effectively plan and control the economic development of the various nations, and it does so, of course, in accordance with its own interests and regardless of any legal or ideological considerations. In the 19th century, when it reigned almost unchallenged, liberalism supported the colonialist ventures of the European powers, sources of cheap raw materials. When, in the 20th century, nationalism came to dominate the Old Continent, this same liberalism supported and, to a certain extent, imposed the policy of decolonisation: it found it easier to dominate the new indigenous 'nations' than their former white rulers. For the multinational organisations that serve as the instruments of big finance, the only thing that matters is the maintenance and reinforcement of an international division of labour that slows down as much as possible the industrialisation of countries supplying primary products.

Such economic complementarity between nations cannot be achieved without their fragmentation. Egalitarian individualism prevails not only within each community but also, and for the same reasons, on the international stage. Big finance is by no means a champion of global unity, far from it. Undoubtedly, the owners of capital have always had a 'headquarters' located in a nation whose people, or at least part of them, have benefited from it. But we saw, as a consequence of the Second World War, the superstate change continents. The preservation and even the proliferation of national communities offers nothing but advantages for it. It allows for 'divide and rule', diverting the attention of the people from economic and social issues and directing it towards border disputes by exploiting old historical rivalries. It also allows for wars, which represent maximum consumption in a minimum of time and at scarcity prices, and constitute the desperate or cynical remedy for crises

of mass production. Incidentally, capitalism did not invent war. But it knows how to use it as an instrument of catharsis, domination and salvation. It knows how to sublimate, *for the benefit of the people,* the defence of its power against rebellious communities and the defence or conquest of a market into patriotism and idealism. Undoubtedly, the financial international is not immune to internal rivalries. But its universal empire is certainly not the myth to which its defenders seek to reduce it.

The actions of international finance exacerbate the pathological nature of the current economic infrastructure. It is no longer, in effect, merely an internal set of forces of a certain nature imposing its guiding intent on the evolution of the community, but rather an external dynamism that dominates the entire social body for its own benefit. The predominance of financial power is thus doubly abnormal: both economically and because it is alien to the Community.

200. The technocratic regime.

The growing administrative complexity of the modern state means that the bourgeois oligarchy, which in the last century held – either directly or through frontmen – public offices of some importance, is increasingly forced to delegate functions to specialists who do not come from its own ranks nor are fully beholden to its aims. These are technical experts and senior officials who constitute indispensable instruments of power and who, selected through competitive examination (see Paragraph 190), serve the regime but consider themselves independent of it. With them, the administration is tending towards autonomy. Far from carrying out orders received from the government by interpreting them solely for their correct application, it adopts its own criteria, alien to the historical intention embodied by the governing body of the Community. Not only does it resist the leadership, but it also pressures it to adopt its own points of view. It manages to infiltrate the government through advisers and even to occupy undersecretariats and 'technical' ministries.

The rising technobureaucracy thus comes into conflict with the oligarchy, which is gradually losing ground and becoming increasingly dependent on its theoretical subordinates—a phenomenon that is evident even in large capitalist enterprises. A genuine diarchy then emerges, which serves to further weaken the 'occupied' state. It is true that technical and administrative cadres ensure a degree of continuity for the state, particularly noticeable in cases of particular incoherence and instability in political power, as occurred with the Fourth French Republic. But such continuity is merely routine when the bureaucracy prevails, or dangerously innovative when a technocracy does so, which, due to the one-sided training of its members, tends to treat the means as an end in itself. To make matters worse, technology knows no borders, and the international technocratic bodies that have proliferated since the Second World War impose their stateless viewpoints on specialists in each country with little difficulty.

In the Soviet world, the process unfolded differently. The group that seized power in Russia clearly had political intentions. But the monopolistic capitalism it imposed and the rapid pace it set for technical development in a largely unindustrialised society had two consequences. On the one hand, the entire population was proletarianised, which made it necessary to organise them within a sprawling administrative and party bureaucracy. On the other hand, specialists had to be trained in haste, and their training consequently had to be limited to the bare essentials. The structuring of the entire social body thus came to depend on a top-down movement, and the centralising state was forced to make decisions in all fields, including those unrelated to political functions. It could not do so without competent staff. Hence, the technobureaucracy very quickly infiltrated the government itself and came to dominate it. The administrative and the political become confused, as we have already noted (see Paragraph 72), not in their functions, which remain separate, but in their personnel. To put it another way, it is not the administration that becomes political, but the administrators who step beyond their functional remit and occupy government posts which they are generally incapable of performing. The State is reduced to a mere sum of fragmented technical functions. It becomes inhuman and apolitical. It tends to subjugate a Community with which it no longer feels any solidarity. It thus loses all legitimacy.

201. Militarism.

The pathological supremacy of technocratic structures is a strictly contemporary phenomenon, as the forces at play first appeared in history only very recently. Militarism, that is to say the situation resulting from the interference of the Armed Forces in the social, and especially political, life of society, has, on the contrary, been evident throughout history, and few peoples have not suffered from it.

The significance of the military factor in social development varies according to historical circumstances; it can be paramount, as it was for the rural communities – the future fiefdoms – of the early Middle Ages, and as it always is in times of war. Logically, the role of the armed forces changes at the same pace and in accordance with the changing needs of society. Militarism exists only when this role assumes greater importance than the situation demands, thereby taking on a pathological character by making the life of society and the functioning of the state dependent, to a greater or lesser extent, on institutions that are not equipped to perform functions that do not fall within their remit. It is normal that in war, or in the preparation for war, the Armed Forces—then an essential instrument of political leadership—occupy a dominant position within the State of which they form part, and that everything, save for the historical purpose, is subordinated to them. In such a case, they may even come to be confused with the governing body of society, embodying that purpose, which could not continue to assert itself without them. Nor is the possibility ruled out that, in

in times of peace, they may legitimately become a decisive minority capable of restoring to an 'occupied' or weakened state the independence or power to which it is entitled.

Militarism tends to arise precisely when the Armed Forces are unable to perform their specific functions—which are of a military nature—and at the same time lack revolutionary motives or aims, in the true sense of the word (see Paragraph 148). The officer corps exists for the sake of war, and only in times of conflict do its privileges make full sense, for the rights it enjoys find their justification in responsibility and danger. In times of peace, the military personnel carry out routine tasks, which are essential but of no immediate use. However, they find it difficult to relinquish their dominant position. They demand preferential treatment in all areas. Accustomed to imposing their will arbitrarily and without regard for anything else, the temptation to take by force what is withheld from them is very great, and they do not always resist it.

On the other hand, the career officer knows very little about civilians, and what he does know is largely inaccurate. The conscripts who arrive at the barracks each year form an undisciplined and scruffy rabble that requires weeks of effort to make presentable. Most of the others are, in his view, reservists who have forgotten what they learnt during their military service. Conversely, the people he associates with in his social life, as they belong to the same social class, are generally better educated than he is. Hence a distrustful attitude that stems both from a sense of superiority towards some and an inferiority complex towards others, and which often manifests itself as arrogance. If we add to all this the fact that the military man considers himself qualified to hold any post requiring leadership skills, we can easily understand that his very patriotism drives him to sideline civilians or impose his will on them when he feels they are failing. Personal ambitions thus combine with professional bias and the good intentions of the officer corps to foster militarism.

202. The Praetorian power.

It would be incorrect to infer from our discussion in the previous section that the military is always engaged in a power struggle that inevitably pits it against the civilian government. The tendency towards militarism is constant, but there are two factors that curb it, generally successfully. Firstly, there is the tradition of service that prevails in the Armed Forces, especially in countries where the military role is perpetuated within aristocratic families or, at the very least, is associated with strict norms stemming from a solid monarchical heritage and implying an indestructible loyalty to the sovereign. Secondly, there is the 'professionalist' mindset of the soldier with little inclination for warfare, for whom the 'military profession' is nothing more than the performance of a well-regarded public service, which any stance taken in areas outside his specific duties could jeopardise.

It does, however, happen that, in certain historical circumstances, the temptation towards militarism proves stronger than tradition and prudence. It even happens at times that the anomalous pressure exerted by the Armed Forces on the governing body of society reaches such extremes that it descends into praetorianism, that is to say, into a political regime in which the sum of powers lies in the hands of the military leaders, who wield it through one of their own or via a figurehead. The state becomes an instrument through which one of its parts, necessarily subordinate, takes over the community it is by nature meant to serve. The best-known historical case of praetorianism comes from the late Roman Empire, when the legions appointed, not without conflict, the Caesar of the moment. Latin America provides us, with its 'coups' misnamed revolutions, with countless examples of such a phenomenon.

The Praetorian regime places all the Community's resources at the disposal of the officer corps. Military structures become infrastructure, and historical developments unfold in accordance with the interests of the Armed Forces and with a view to satisfying their leaders' thirst for power. Not only is an excessive proportion of the state budget allocated to lavish salaries and superfluous purchases of military equipment, but the 'occupation forces' trample on collective and individual freedoms, subjecting all members of society to unfounded discipline. Legitimate wartime military infrastructure is justified by the vital needs of the community. Pathological peacetime infrastructure, by contrast, reflects the parasitic dominance of an instrumental power over sovereign power.

This is not to say that the Praetorians act with malicious intent, nor even that they are aware of the abuses they commit. Pride is one of the most pronounced traits of the military mindset. Members of the officer corps often believe, generally in all good faith, that they are better qualified than any civilian to hold positions of state leadership. A clear conscience thus serves as a further factor in this usurpation.

203. Clericalism.

At first glance, nothing seems more different from a soldier than a priest. Yet both share the conviction that they are endowed with a special dignity that places them above others, and the certainty that they possess an indisputable superiority over the latter. Like the officer corps, the clergy are accustomed to giving orders without having to justify them. But their authority is even less open to question, for it does not derive from the community or the force of arms, but from God.

To understand the reason for the arrogance that characterises the minister of any religion, one must put oneself in the shoes of a man who is deeply convinced that he expresses, through his words and deeds, the divine will and possesses absolute truth, if not that he is in direct contact with God and

to be his representative on earth. The Catholic priest also possesses the supernatural power to transform bread and wine into the body and blood of the Son of God. Whether or not transubstantiation takes place depends on his will. To put it in theologically incorrect but psychologically accurate terms, he commands God to make himself present on the altar, and God obeys. How could he, under such circumstances, tolerate mere men resisting his authority? How could he conceive of the State having the pretension of including religious social forces in the communal synthesis, rather than placing itself unconditionally at the service of God and, therefore, of the Church and its hierarchy? Hence clericalism, that is, the interference of the clergy in the temporal, and especially political, life of the community.

If the Church – any church – were a society of angels and the political community a society of beasts, relations between religious and temporal power would pose no major problem: the respective spheres of action would be perfectly demarcated and it would simply be a matter of establishing the rules for a necessary good neighbourly relationship. But man is a substance and life is unified in its dynamism. Man is not a 'temporal being' plus a 'religious being' but a being who is both temporal and religious at the same time, in close interaction and interpenetration. Delimiting the sphere of two powers that both have the whole person as their subject is, therefore, not as easy as it seems at first glance.

The State, as the organ of temporal power, cannot, in fact, remain indifferent to the religious superstructure of the Community, which intervenes—sometimes powerfully—in the causal chain of social events. The Church, the organ of religious power, cannot remain indifferent to the political structures of the Community, for institutions imply an ideology whose demarcation from the spiritual is never very clear. Let us add that the men who constitute its hierarchy – the clergy – do not act in heaven but on earth, thus forming with the faithful not a spiritual society but a temporal society oriented towards the spiritual. Hence the State tends to encroach upon the Church's domain and the Church upon the State's. This is not a matter of abuse but of an inevitable conflict of power. Anti-clericalism does not, therefore, imply an anti-religious attitude, nor even an anti-ecclesiastical one. It constitutes merely a natural reaction of the State (and subsequently of the conscientious citizen, even if he is a disciplined member of the Church) to the temporal pressure of ecclesiastical power, just as anti-statism is a normal reaction of the Church to the spiritual pressure of political power.

204. Theocratic power.

Clericalism always tends to accord religious superstructures—and, consequently, ecclesiastical structures—greater importance than they normally deserve in social evolution and, ultimately, to subordinate political authorities to the clergy. Its ultimate expression is theocracy, that is, the political regime in which power lies in the hands of the ecclesiastical hierarchy. Through it, the clergy – part of the social body – establishes its supremacy over the organ-

It undermines the whole system, when it does not indirectly impose upon it an authority from outside the community. The Church thus 'occupies' the State and subordinates the community's historical purpose to an uncontrollable 'divine will'—dangerously interpreted by those in power, who are neither gods nor angels but human beings whose ambition is all the greater the loftier the purpose that justifies it. On the other hand, the theocratic regime entrusts political functions to men who, by virtue of their education, their way of life and their primary concerns, are the least suited to performing them.

It cannot be denied that religious fervour is capable of inspiring great undertakings that mere political decisions would be unable to bring about. Without it, the conquests of Muhammad and his successors could not have taken place, nor could the Crusades. But faith, viewed from a social perspective, is nothing more than a brute force, devoid of any guiding purpose. In itself, it constitutes a factor of anarchy. Only through proper channelling within the community framework can it be transformed into a positive force. However, the State, by its political nature, is incapable of creating or even controlling religious fervour, and the Church can do so only on the margins and, therefore, in opposition to the State. The solution would seem to be the union of religious and political power in a single body, whether the former imposes itself upon one or several pre-existing states, as the Papacy managed for a time in the Middle Ages, or whether it creates its own temporal structures, in the manner of Muhammad. Thus we arrive at the theocratic state. History shows us that such a state can achieve great things for a relatively short period, but that it never manages to stabilise itself from a functional point of view. The force that governs social evolution and, through its governing body, the Community itself, is not of a political nature. It therefore distorts, for its own benefit, the indispensable process of synthesis. It despises and crushes other social forces, which is only possible for as long as religious exaltation lasts. When faith returns to its normal level of affirmation, the theocratic state loses its foundation and disappears, unless it adopts the political structures it lacked and thereby renounces its distinctive character. Only in isolated and loosely organised communities, such as Tibet, did theocracy manage to endure, but in a state of mediocrity devoid of ambition and at the mercy of external events. As in all other cases of infrastructural usurpation, the predominance of a religious superstructure is, in the long run, necessarily a cause of pathological weakening.

XX THE SUPERSTRUCTURAL DECOMPOSITION

205. Liberalism and materialism.

In the three preceding chapters, we frequently referred to egalitarian individualism as a factor in the pathological situation in which the contemporary world finds itself. In reality, the anarchising tendency of human beings is one of the

aspects of the natural dialectical conflict between the individual and society (see Note 9). What is abnormal is not its dissociative pressure but its predominance, and this has often manifested itself throughout history. However, in our era, the phenomenon has become widespread because it serves the interests of the bourgeoisie, which has used it as an instrument of conquest and infrastructural assertion.

The small groups of merchants and moneylenders that had formed on the fringes of European society from the 14th century onwards had tried in vain to use their wealth directly to seize power. Loans to princes led their reckless originators to the stake or to prison, and the establishment of a capitalist mode of production in Brabant had not lasted due to its unacceptable social consequences. When the Reformers appeared, the doctrine of predestination—older than Christianity itself but which had never managed to gain acceptance—gave the bourgeoisie—in the modern sense of the word—the opportunity to resort to a religious path to achieve its aims. Calvin taught, in effect, like his predecessors, that men are born predestined for salvation or eternal damnation, without their merits being able to alter a fate fixed by God. But he added that the elect are marked with a sign, wealth, which distinguishes them in this earthly life. Heaven is thus populated by merchants and bankers. The bourgeoisie, enthusiastic about a doctrine that vindicated its hitherto despised members, embraced the new religion en masse, except in Italy. Calvinism failed to gain a foothold in the most powerful communities of Europe, but retained two strongholds: Geneva, a city of bankers, and the Netherlands, the most important centre of major overseas trade. It also retained significant positions in England, despite the Puritan defeat.

It was from Geneva, Amsterdam and London that the ‘conquering class’, as Georges Sorel aptly calls it, launched its assault in the 18th century on the state of what was then the most powerful community, France. It did so by disseminating, through Masonic lodges and ‘Societies of Thought’, a new doctrine according to which men, naturally good but corrupted by society, were born free and equal and would come together, through individual decisions, by means of a social pact and a political contract. The Community would be reduced to a mass of essentially undifferentiated individuals who would only voluntarily limit their freedom. This is an attractive doctrine for human beings, who always submit to the impositions of the social order with a certain degree of resistance. Of course, the dissemination of political liberalism by the Encyclopaedists in the pay of the bourgeoisie carefully left the other side of the coin in the shadows: economic liberalism, which would allow the rich to use their money, on the one hand, to proletarianise and exploit the poor and, on the other, to manipulate public opinion. Materialism is, in fact, the inevitable consequence of liberalism, which it either destroys—save for some of its outward appearances, as in the democratic world—or renounces, as in the Soviet world.

206. Individualistic and egalitarian law.

The spread of liberal doctrine enabled the bourgeoisie to take control of the French state and subsequently, through arms and propaganda, of the other states of Western Europe. No sooner had it come to power than it set about transforming existing structures and imposing upon social development the economic infrastructure that corresponded to its nature and class interests. To accomplish this task, it first needed to replace the law—whether customary or written—which expressed and upheld the natural order, with legal norms that would impose and secure its own dominance.

Two fundamental principles underpin the liberal law established at that time. The first places the individual above society and the various groups that comprise it, except insofar as the very existence of the Community—created by the social contract—is concerned, and places the wealthy individual above the poor individual. Intermediate communities and social groups become associations whose activity and continuity depend exclusively on the will of their members, and which are tolerated only to the extent that their demands do not hinder the exercise of bourgeois supremacy. The guilds are dissolved for opposing the free exploitation of the poor by the rich, and only workers' struggles will secure the legal recognition of trade unions. The family, reduced to the marital unit, loses the right to property, and the compulsory division of inheritance imposes individualism even against the will of the heirs. The enterprise becomes a 'capital association', and the producers are no longer part of it. All legislation is drafted as if for a man 'born an orphan and destined to die a bachelor', to use Renan's aforementioned expression.

The second principle of liberal law is equality before the law. Human beings are regarded as abstract entities, regardless of their qualitative and functional characteristics. The same legal rules—and, where applicable, the same penalties—apply to everyone. Everyone has the same rights and everyone has the same obligations. Nothing could be further from the truth. On the one hand, indeed, human beings, by virtue of their bio-psychological condition, have natural needs that are not shared by everyone else and which they have a right to satisfy to the extent of existing possibilities; on the other hand, they perform a specific social function that is unique to them and which entails particular demands. If the law does not recognise these differentiated situations, it either becomes so general that it loses all effectiveness, or it leads – and sometimes compels – individuals to renounce all particularism. Thus, for example, the equality of the sexes before the law, now almost complete in all the legal codes of the civilised world, fosters the increasingly pronounced masculinisation of women and contributes powerfully to the disintegration of the family unit, whose hierarchical order it contradicts and combats. The old feudal system, which understood the individual at the biopsychic level and within their functional framework, applied to them the legal norms corresponding to the rights and obligations proper to their status and subjected them to the jurisdiction of their peers, coincided with the or-

natural right. The panjurist system, on the other hand, is a powerful factor in massification.

The principle of legal equality also entails a profound injustice. If the strong and the weak have the same rights and obligations, nothing imposes on the former a duty to protect the latter, nor does it ensure the latter the protection they need. If the rich and the poor have, by law, the same *jus utendi et abutendi* over their property, it is obvious that the former will be able to subjugate and exploit the latter, but not the other way round. Equality therefore favours the strong and the rich – and, in a liberal-capitalist system, the rich are the only strong ones – at the expense of the weak and the poor – the weak being the poor – that is to say, the bourgeoisie at the expense of the proletariat and the *intelligentsia*. Such, moreover, is its raison d'être.

207. The relaxation of morals.

Egalitarian individualism obviously leads, through the application of a single law for all, to the elimination or subordination of customary law. But it goes much further still, for it tends to destroy custom itself. Firstly, written legislation encroaches upon every sphere. Its rules are so general that no one escapes their reach, and so detailed that nothing remains unregulated by them. The golden dream of legal positivists is to prohibit everything that is not mandatory. In the past, custom was law. Today, the law increasingly marginalises custom, systematically reducing its scope. Secondly, the individual imbued with prevailing legal positivism and the principle of legal equality downplays the importance of any unwritten rule and refuses to comply with any imposition they consider demeaning.

This does not mean, of course, that tradition has ceased entirely to influence people's behaviour, even in countries where the breakdown of the superstructure has wreaked the most havoc, nor does it mean that written law is the sole regulator of social coexistence today. Customs have not disappeared: they have simply become more relaxed. What 'has always been done' seems archaic and somewhat ridiculous. However, social life imposes a 'set of rules' that the law does not cover in all its aspects. New norms must be created. But social changes occur so rapidly that these new norms do not have time to become customs. They take on, like those that define American *status*, the character of mere fashions.

We have already had occasion to point out (see paragraph 171) that fashion is, as a rule, a superficial custom with shallow roots and, consequently, of shorter duration than others. We have also noted that its ever-increasing instability is the result, amongst other factors, of the desire for equality, which leads the lower strata of the population to imitate the small minority that seeks to distinguish itself through refined behaviour closely linked to artistic creation and culture. This increasingly rapid process forces the pioneering group to constantly reassess—in order to remain distinct—their way of dressing,

, speak, cultivate themselves, entertain themselves, and so on. Difference is no longer sought through quality – there is no time for that – but through novelty. Pursued by the herd, the elites change for the sake of change and no longer to improve their lifestyle. Commercial persuasion techniques contribute to further accelerating the pace of a frenzied movement. The instability of fashion is, in itself, of little significance, given the very superficial nature of the phenomenon. But when it permeates custom, it becomes a serious factor in superstructural decay.

208. Religious individualism.

Liberal theories were adopted and disseminated by the bourgeoisie because they constituted an unbeatable instrument of social disintegration. They had already demonstrated their effectiveness through Byzantine law—misnamed 'Roman' law—and the Reformation. In the religious sphere, it would be easy to find precedents far older than the one just mentioned: Buddhism, for example, which dismantled the Vedic superstructures. But the process that emerged within Christianity, with Calvin's preaching, is of more immediate interest to us.

We are not referring here either to the reasons for the success enjoyed by the doctrine of predestination in 16th-century bourgeois circles (see Note 205) or to the effects of Calvinism on ecclesiastical structures (see Note 179), but rather to its purely superstructural consequences. Catholicism had, in the Middle Ages, attained perfect coherence and fulfilment. On the dual foundation of the sacred books and tradition, and with the contribution of Greek philosophy, its theologians had developed a seamless body of doctrine whose dogma derived, through the strictest deductive process, from undisputed postulates. The Church's autocratic regime made it possible to prevent and, where necessary, suppress any attempt at deviation, both in matters of faith and of discipline. For the final word always came from Rome, and Rome alone expressed the truth. The believer had no choice but to submit to it.

By proclaiming the free personal interpretation of the Holy Scriptures, the Reformation introduced into theology a divisive element par excellence. The definition of Truth no longer stems, in effect, from the infallible Magisterium but from individual consciences. There are as many truths as there are believers, and all are of equal value. Religion thus loses its social character. It is no longer, at least from a dogmatic point of view, the indestructible bond – in the etymological sense of the word – that unites the faithful, but rather the personal expression of an inner state that is valid by virtue of its very existence. Thus individualised, beliefs multiply and, in the majority of believers, become diluted until they are reduced to a mere mental attitude. Needless to say, anyone who is deeply convinced that they can arrive at the truth about God by their own means will find it very difficult to be convinced of their fallibility in less important matters. Religious individualism thus has a powerful impact on all areas of psychosocial life.

Over the past few decades, and particularly since the Second Vatican Council, the Calvinist conception of faith has been gaining ground within the Catholic Church, where it is giving rise not only to the tendency towards amorphism already mentioned (see Note 179), but also to the collapse of superstructures that were hitherto monolithic. Dogma is debated, rationalised and is losing its substance. Freedom of conscience and worship, anathematised for almost two millennia, is proclaimed as an inalienable right of the 'human person', that is to say, of the individual isolated from his social and even ecclesial context. If it continues along this path—and it would already be difficult to turn back—Catholicism will soon be nothing more than a collection of more or less confused sects, mingled with the countless ones into which the Reformed Church has divided and continues to divide. 371

209. Philosophical idealism and irrationalism.

The realm of philosophical inquiry has always been more open than that of religious dogma. The intellectual freedom—almost always respected—of those who developed profound and obscure conceptions of the world and of life only had negative repercussions during periods of significant superstructural upheaval. Traditionally, religion, tradition and custom limited and even prevented the dissemination, beyond small groups of high cultural standing and sound judgement, of ideas that were counterproductive to the psychosocial order. The situation has changed over the last two hundred years. Not only do the expansion of formal education and the ever-increasing reach of the media allow philosophical theories – whether in their original form or 'popularised' – to penetrate all strata of the population, but the ruling bourgeois minorities also promote and disseminate subversive ideas which they use as weapons to combat traditional superstructures. Philosophical fads even emerge!

The theories in vogue throughout the nineteenth century and so far in the twentieth [21] have, as in the era of Hellenistic decline, a single source and two lines of development. Their common origin is the old Platonic idealism, which retains its primitive dualism in Descartes, Kant and Maritain, and takes on a more coherent monistic form with Hegel and Marx. In both cases we find theses fundamentally opposed to the Aristotelian realism that St Thomas Aquinas had so successfully incorporated into Catholic theology. The first line deifies the soul, distinct from the body, and attributes to it absolute free will, which implies freedom of conscience. The second makes the human being a mere link in the cosmos – Idea or Matter, which amounts to the same thing – expressing itself partially and temporarily in its necessary evolution. Either man is entirely free, and we tend towards the flock, or he is entirely determined, and we tend towards the anthill. In both cases, his social nature is distorted.

21) – Written in 1969 (Editor's note)

The anarchy brought about by liberalism and the strict conformism imposed by Soviet monopolism were bound to provoke reactions, including in the realm of ideas. Some philosophers, without daring to champion, as others do, the old realism, attempt to neutralise idealism by clinging to the world of phenomena, in the manner of Comte, James and, to a certain extent, Husserl and Heidegger. Others, and in particular the post-World War II existentialists, accept the existing decay as a normal process and derive from it a pessimistic defence of the absurd and of nothingness. Irrationalism invades the fields of metaphysics and ethics and subjugates reason itself, turning it into an instrument in the service of intellectual disintegration. Meanwhile, some thinkers in the Soviet world, driven by an insurmountable despair, seek in liberal ideas the expression of their nihilism. Everywhere, young people who are disillusioned but unable to react adopt the cheap by-products of philosophical irrationalism and sink into the chaos of a non-conformism without solution.

210. Imaginal education.

The systematised irrationalism we have just mentioned is merely one aspect of a much broader trend, though of the same nature, which is rapidly encroaching upon all fields of contemporary man's mental activity and contributes powerfully, at the superstructural level, to the massification we analysed above (see Note 173) from another perspective. The tendency to replace the concept with the image in educational methodology is one of the basic forms that this process takes.

The imaginal education that today prevails almost entirely in primary education and is making slow but steady progress in secondary education has its origins in teaching methods designed for children who, due to hereditary inferiority or some accident, prove incapable of grasping the simplest reasoning or sustaining even the slightest effort of attention. Instinctive and receptive, the 'retarded' child is carried along, without satisfactorily mastering them, by his fundamental drives and by the images supplied by his senses. However, they are not entirely devoid of intelligence, since their imagination functions to some extent. Their mental life is not reduced to a succession of 'raw' images; they establish a certain order, not very rigorous but real, among the data they receive from the outside world. On the other hand, the 'under-gifted' child shows a certain capacity for interest in what he finds pleasant. Hence the need—clearly understood by innovators—to replace the training of the intellect and the will with an appeal to the imagination and interest. A child who is unable to associate the letters 'M' and 'A' according to a certain relationship, or even to recognise them due to an inability to think abstractly, may perfectly well link in his mind the image—that is to say, the drawing—of the word 'mum' with an image that vaguely reminds him of his mother. A child who is unable to focus their attention on the sentences the teacher speaks or writes on the blackboard may well take an interest in pictures

educational activities and set about reconstructing them through some kind of puzzle. In this way, one manages to replace, to some extent, their stunted rational intelligence with an imaginative intelligence, and to substitute non-existent abstract thought with useful concrete thought. Nothing could be more satisfying.

When this methodology is applied to normal children, as is increasingly the case today, the pupil's mind is plunged into an artificial imaginary world that is superimposed upon the inner imaginary world developed during the early years of life. The image which, for the 'retarded' child, represents a concrete object is transformed, on the contrary, for the normal child, into an autonomous psychic entity which acquires such reality and power that it comes to replace the object: whereas the image is, in his mind, a representation of the thing, it is the thing that is a representation of the image. The child thus lives in a state of perpetual fantasy. When asked to engage in further abstract thinking, they feel as though they are being removed from reality and plunged into an arbitrary, meaningless world, and they refuse to analyse the wondrous realm in which they feel at ease. On the other hand, the pupil's entire activity is enjoyable, and everyone goes to great lengths to let him do what he likes and to present to him in a pleasant way what is expected of him, which leads to a relaxation of his psychological tension.

The so-called 'active school' is thus based on the free development of the child, adapting to the child's mind rather than shaping it. In this sense, it would be more accurate to call it a 'passive school'. Applying methods intended for 'mentally retarded' children to normal children turns them into 'retarded' children. The same would happen if the adults surrounding a baby of a few months, instead of helping him to stand up and setting an example, were to encourage him to crawl and do so themselves. The result would be that the child would persist in taking the path of least resistance and would never realise his potential to stand on his own two feet. We have proof of this in the various studied cases of children raised by wild animals. The so-called 'active school' makes its pupils walk on all fours psychologically. If we are dealing with unfortunate children who cannot stand up, the method is perfect: better that they walk like this than not at all. But if we are dealing with gifted, normal children, the result is catastrophic.

211. The predominance of images.

Imaginal education tends to weaken, in the individual, rational intelligence and the will, in the ordinary sense of the word. Now, thought is the rational organisation of images of various kinds – sensory, kinesthetic and conceptual – that is to say, of irrational dynamic elements. Without images, the mind would lack the raw material to construct logical chains; without rational capacity, it could not organise the images, which would then arise at random and project themselves in a chaotic manner.

Whilst no human being is entirely devoid of imagery or reason, the relationship between these two aspects of thought varies considerably from one individual to another. Leaving aside the madman, whose reason is pathologically distorted, we find two extreme cases: that of the primitive, in whom sensory and kinesthetic images—with almost no conceptual images to speak of—exceed the rational capacity for organisation; and that of the rationalist, who attempts, as far as possible, to reduce his mental life to logically ordered conceptual images, despising and repressing all others. In the first case, the only one relevant to our analysis, mental disorder stems from a deficiency of reason, caused by a natural incapacity or a lack of adequate education. But a similar situation can be artificially produced in a civilised person if the quantity of images available in their mind is increased without a proportional improvement in their rational capacity. This is what is happening in the world today

In the early 20th century, the average person lived, from birth to death, within an unchanging physical environment. Day after day, his senses registered the same landscape, the same urban scene, the same house, the same works of art and, to a certain extent, the same faces. The visual, olfactory, auditory and other images that penetrated his mind acquired, by repeating themselves almost unchanged, an ever-increasing force that increasingly incorporated him into the physical and social environment. Today, civilised man constantly absorbs images alien to the sphere in which he lives. The ease of travel and, above all, the circulation of newspapers mean that he is subjected to the impact of foreign elements which often disorientate him but which generally do not overwhelm his capacity for organisation. For the mind defends itself against such an invasion by consigning to oblivion what the individual does not need to remember. This is possible because the images in question – leaving aside concepts, which are irrelevant here – are weak, as they are not frequently repeated and belong to a single sensory category, usually the visual.

The emergence of complex images derived from cinema and television has very different effects. These are audiovisual and, often, conceptual entities that do not appear in isolation but are endowed with their own inherent dynamism. In other words, they are already organised in their own way, and are thus akin to the result of imaginative processes. They thus constitute a prefabricated thought that requires no effort whatsoever on the part of the person absorbing it and, on the contrary, spares them the mental work required by any elaboration of individual images. Cinema and television not only depersonalise and de-contextualise the subject but also turn their mind into a mere screen for receiving perceived or remembered imaginal complexes. By not having to link together the constituent elements of part of his psychic life, man becomes passive. He renounces the use of his reason and lives in a permanent dream, with the difference that this dream is not the product of his own subconscious elaboration but the fruit of someone else's thought. The 'television viewer' suffers,

Well, a form of mental alienation that varies in accordance with one's rational capacity but which, in the majority of cases, is distinctly pathological in nature.

212. The rise of the subconscious.

Nevertheless, the images projected or evoked by the mass media—whose effects we have just mentioned—constitute coherent wholes. Each possesses an immanent order arising from the synthesis of relationships existing within the object—or idea—represented and from the subject's psychic intelligence, at its various levels. Chaos thus manifests itself, to a certain extent, amongst the images, but without altering their meaning. And there is no shortage of highly organised minds capable of mastering, ordering and controlling imaginative processes which, for the average person, would be overwhelming.

Such minds belong to men of great culture. Yet it is precisely these men who are subjected to the onslaught of techniques more refined than their predecessors', the effects of which they complement with the utmost efficiency. So-called 'modern art' tends, in fact, to dissociate the image, reducing it to its constituent elements. In it, music is nothing more than sounds – if not noises – juxtaposed without any intentional correlation; the painting is limited to shapeless patches of colour, placed on the canvas in no order whatsoever; literature – especially poetry – not only rejects grammar and any intelligible connection but, with *Dadaism,* goes so far as to deconstruct the very word itself. Surrealism, whose theorists do not hesitate to act as apologists for total chaos, tends to reduce psychic life to loose, random complexes of primary impressions. Were such absolute decomposition to be achieved, intelligence would no longer intervene at any of its operational levels, and the mind would become a sort of electronic valve receiving simple impulses, purely passive and even unconscious.

Such a prevalence of the irrational is one of the key factors behind the anxiety suffered, to a greater or lesser extent, by the educated minorities of the Western world. Faced with such inner imbalance, people resort to palliatives – alcohol, psychotropic drugs or narcotics – which, in the long run, only serve to worsen their condition, or they place themselves in the hands of a psychiatrist. It was therefore to be expected that psychopathology would develop considerably, as it has done in recent decades. The serious issue is that it has turned towards psychoanalytic techniques, which, far from curing or alleviating the condition, tend to aggravate it. Let us recall, in fact, that psychoanalysis, setting aside its pansexualist theory which does not concern us here, considers that the psychopathological crisis is resolved when the patient manages to recall its distant cause, generally arbitrarily situated in early childhood. The psychoanalyst then seeks to relax the patient's rational controls, so that the patient can recall the subconscious and unconscious images linked to that cause. Since anxiety stems, as we have seen, from the irrationalisation of thought,

We cannot help but observe that psychoanalysis, far from curing it, actually reinforces its causes.

213. Subconscious stimulation.

Not all images that penetrate the mind are random or devoid of intention. The induced relaxation of conscious defences and the weakening of the rational capacity for psychic organisation can, in fact, be exploited – and are exploited – to influence the members of a social group by injecting them with a stimulus that most of them are unable to resist.

Until the 1930s, advertising was little more than a simple presentation and offer of goods or services. It relied on straightforward, if not simplistic, techniques based on repetition, with a clear emphasis on explanation rather than suggestion. The situation changed when images began to be used to link the product on offer with the great underlying forces of the psyche. Today, it is not cologne that is sold but freshness; it is not wine that is sold but strength; it is not a car that is sold but *status*. The will to power and the seven deadly sins constitute the raw material of the campaign creator. Sex pervades everything. From a commercial point of view, there can be no doubt as to the effectiveness of such methods. But their consequences for the mind of the civilised person, and especially that of the city dweller, are sinister. Indeed, every advertising impact of the kind mentioned brings to the surface a myriad of subconscious images related not to the article or service offered but to the stimulus employed. And such images often trigger emotional processes that affect the whole of the biopsychic being. The individual who lives in a large city, reads newspapers and magazines regularly, watches television and frequently goes to the cinema lives in an almost permanent state of overexcitement, bordering on imbalance: all the more so because transfer advertising—that is, advertising which artificially associates a stimulating image with the representation of the product or service on offer—tends to eliminate all conscious control and to provoke conditioned reflexes rather than reasoned decisions. Man thus becomes a sort of cybernetic machine: by pressing a button, the advertiser automatically achieves a certain effect. But the victim of such conditioning not only loses their free will but also receives, with every stimulus, a violent biopsychic jolt. By multiplying mnemonic and cenesthetic images whilst simultaneously suppressing or weakening rational control, transfer advertising plunges man into a veritable mental chaos. Subliminal advertising, by making it possible to introduce the stimulus directly into the subconscious, further exacerbates the effects of the 'brainwashing' to which contemporary man is subjected, without realising it.

Techniques of mental conditioning are not, of course, applied solely in the commercial sphere. Political propaganda employs them as well. Those who control the media are in a position to project, onto minds that have already been broken, a persistent stimulus that unifies the masses and drives them in

a particular direction. The subject falls within the realm of social psychology. Let us, therefore, confine ourselves to mentioning it here. We could not fail to do so: the irrationalisation of minds does, in fact, accelerate the process of massification to an extraordinary degree, which constitutes the most serious of the pathological states that a social group can suffer.

214. The pressure from the irrational.

The disintegration of the mind does not occur to the same degree or with the same ease in all human beings. The individual of high intellectual calibre, great culture and a strong nervous system will withstand it without much effort and will know how to react, in self-defence, to any disintegrating aggression. On the contrary, the irrational person—that is to say, the one who is carried away by their instincts, impressions and emotions and lacks inner discipline—suffers without resistance the effects of the psychic environment that dominates and guides them.

Now, rationality varies from one individual to another, but it also varies according to defining characteristics that are common to all members of a given human group. Some children are more rational than others, and even than certain adults. But the child, as a generic category, is undoubtedly less rational than the adult. The same can be said of women in relation to men, of workers in relation to peasants, or of black people in relation to white people. This means that within every social group there are elements more prone than others to irrationality, and that certain groups, considered as a whole, offer less resistance than others to mental disintegration. Obviously, communal order and normal inter-communal relations are not compatible with the predominance of the irrational in collective life. A society consisting exclusively of children, or in which leadership were in the hands of children, would resemble a mental asylum deprived of its nurses. It would be utter chaos.

In today's world, however, there is a growing pressure from the masses—that is to say, ultimately, from those individuals least capable of reasoning through their decisions and acting autonomously. On the one hand, the prevailing egalitarian individualism grants the same theoretical rights—and therefore the same power to influence—to all members of the community, except children, and to all communities. On the other hand, the media are determined to stir up irrational tendencies and, logically, succeed in doing so first and foremost, and to a greater extent, amongst the most impressionable members of their audience. The results are evident even at the biosocial level. The head of the family of old did not fail to take into account the wishes of his wife and children, but he made his decisions in an autocratic manner. Today, he faces such pressure from the irrational members of the group that he often has to yield to it.

This phenomenon is even more evident at Community level. Public opinion, once firmly guided by the elites, has become

a sweeping force driven by the instincts and primal emotions of the majority of the masses. 'Universal' suffrage subjects political leadership to this force. Bad taste pervades the realm of a commercialised culture. Cosmopolitanism introduces into people's minds ideas and sentiments alien to the community tradition. Apparently, the historical evolution of our times depends increasingly on irrational forces of all kinds. But we know (see Sections 195 and 200) that the process of massification serves the purposes of the oligarchic and technocratic minorities who control the media and for whom it is easier to manage a dumbed-down, undifferentiated mass than a lucid populace. Structural decay is not due to the randomness of accidental interactions but to the active intent of the current masters of the world.

XXI CRIME

215. Crime.

The pathological phenomenon that is the subject of this chapter differs fundamentally from those we have studied in the preceding pages. Both the disintegration and dislocation of structures at various levels and the inadequacy of demographic factors to prevailing needs constitute, in effect, exceptional processes that arise and develop only in certain historical periods. If the examples we have given in this regard generally refer to the last two hundred years, it is not so much because we wished to emphasise the contemporary situation and its causes—which are of greater interest to us than distant events—but rather because we often encountered some difficulty in finding cases from earlier periods of our era that would illustrate our analysis. Crime, on the other hand, manifests itself in all ages and in all societies, although its characteristics and its impact on social life vary. It is, therefore, an abnormal but constant phenomenon.

For the sociologist, defining a crime is considerably easier than it is for the moralist or the jurist. It is based, in fact, exclusively on the natural norms of social coexistence. Any act that violates these norms—regardless of whether the perpetrator is an individual or a group, and whatever the causes behind it—is a crime from the perspective of social evolution. The only values on which the sociological judgement in this regard is based are those that contribute to the well-being of the human community in question. The notion of personal responsibility plays no part whatsoever, nor does the relationship with written law. A murder committed by a madman, who is psychologically and morally irresponsible, is just as much a crime as if the perpetrator had been entirely sane, because its social consequences are the same. On the other hand, an act prohibited by some legal text may be generally or occasionally beneficial to the community and, therefore, not a crime, whilst another act authorised and even imposed by the law may be a crime, either always or in certain circumstances. The only point of view common to the sociologist-

For the moralist and the jurist, the key factor is intent. But the moralist's approach differs from that of the others. For him, there is no crime when the act is accidental, but solely because the perpetrator poses no danger to society.

Needless to say, sociology categorically rejects, in this field as in others, any individualistic or egalitarian conception of social order. For sociology, crime is always relative to the functional position of the perpetrator. The concept of social responsibility therefore plays a part in its assessment. The misuse of weapons is more reprehensible in a priest than in a layman, and desertion is more so in an officer than in a private.

216. The crime of abuse of rights.

Crime always stems from an unresolved conflict between social entities – individual or collective – at different levels. But this conflict may have various causes, of which the first to be mentioned is that which, when taken to extremes, constitutes the very natural right of the human being and of the social groups and communities of which they form part.

We already know (see Section 2) that the individual is a product of society and depends on it for their existence and development. This does not mean that they lack rights of their own, but rather that their rights are subordinate to those belonging to the various overlapping or juxtaposed social groups of which they form part and, consequently, are always limited and sometimes nullified by the latter. Social pressure on the individual (see Section 8) is met with personal resistance (see Section 9) to social impositions. Such a dialectic is normal, for its disappearance would entail the complete subjugation of the individual by a community reduced to an anthill and, therefore, tremendously impoverished. Not only does man have natural rights, but he naturally has the right to defend them and, socially, the obligation to do so. Since these rights are expressed not in the form of clearly defined formal precepts but through the dynamics of individual assertion, it is logical that they may, in certain cases, exceed the limits of their legitimate scope and infringe upon the demands of the social order relating to the Community, the groups that comprise it, or the individuals who constitute its 'raw material'. For example, human beings have the natural right to satisfy their vital needs and, if necessary, to steal in order to eat or read, provided that their act does not deprive anyone of the essentials. But anyone who steals because they do not wish to work, steals more than is necessary, or steals what another needs, commits a crime. The individual has the natural right to defend their life. But the deserter who, in doing so, endangers the existence of the Community, which is superior to them, commits a crime. Nothing could be clearer.

The phenomenon in question is not, however, always linked to the rights of the individual. It sometimes happens, in fact, that the entity which oversteps the mark in defending its privileges—that is to say, in asserting itself—is a social group or an intermediate community in conflict with the larger whole that encompasses it. In such cases

the terms of the problem do not change, nor does its solution. It should simply be noted that, contrary to the principles of criminal law in force—though not always respected—in the liberal world, the offence is not necessarily individual but may be collective, as it always is when committed by a community or social group against one of its individual or collective members. For the undue restriction or suppression of the rights that belong by natural law to subordinate social entities constitutes a crime in exactly the same way as the rebellion of these entities against higher-level federative bodies.

217. The crime of non-conformity.

The offence of abuse of rights can, of course, have very serious consequences. However, it does not violate the principle of the natural order. It arises, in fact, solely from the overreach of a valid force whose excessive assertion stems from the very poly-dialectical nature of social evolution. The offence of maladjustment, by contrast, denies validity—at least in practice—to the group or community framework and threatens its very existence. It is one thing to speak of the pathological consequence of the normal antagonism that to some extent pits the individual against society and human groups against one another, and quite another to speak of rebellion against a necessary norm of coexistence.

The basic misfit is an individual who cannot find his rightful place in his social environment because he is unable or unwilling to adapt to the prevailing reality. Such a situation may stem from the characteristics—whether positive or negative—of a personality that lacks sufficient flexibility, or from the shortcomings of a society incapable of providing any of its members with the place they deserve. The idler who refuses to make any productive effort is a misfit, as is the born leader forced into a subordinate role. In a well-established community with a healthy population, this type of maladjustment is exceptional. It does, however, always exist, for there is never a shortage of rigid minds, for better or for worse, and the social order is never perfect. On the other hand, even the best-adapted individual is sometimes faced with a social demand that hinders their fulfilment, at least as they conceive it, leading to a partial and momentary maladjustment. All of the above applies, logically, to a social group integrated into a community to whose needs it does not conform, and especially to ethnic or national minorities that resist assimilation.

The misfit individual or social group may accept the situation or arrangement that is detrimental to them and resign themselves to their fate. But they may also react against the established order in general or against the specific rule that prevents them from acting according to their will. In the first case, we have the pirate or rogue who lives outside the law, individually or collectively; in the second, the individual or social group who, in a specific circumstance and only in that circumstance, acts without regard for the prohibition or regulatory imposition.

For liberal jurists, any violation of the law – and exclusively the violation of the law – is a crime. The sociologist, of course, takes a very different view. For them, there is no crime if the law does not reflect the natural order – or the crime is merely one of contempt, provided the legislative authority is illegitimate – but there is a crime if the act in question violates a necessary norm not provided for in any law. For example, the hungry person who steals food or the person who lends money at interest is a criminal, even under the protection of the law.

218. Crime by degeneration.

Among social misfits, some are distinguished by pathological personality traits. From a medical point of view they are abnormal and from an ethical point of view irresponsible, at least to some extent. Such as the madman who kills in a fit of rage or the imbecile with uncontrollable sexual urges. These are individuals whose hereditary makeup contains a degenerative factor that leads them, irresistibly, to crime. To these must be added addicts who, whether or not following a hereditary predisposition, have acquired an antisocial biopsychic distortion—alcoholism, sexual deviance, gambling addiction, etc.—which may produce the same result and, in any case, may become a hereditary criminal factor in their offspring.

No one today would dare deny the influence of heredity in the field of criminality. What some people, influenced by egalitarian individualism, are reluctant to admit, however, is the existence of a distinct biotype among certain categories of criminals exhibiting regressive characteristics. The born criminal, according to Lombroso, would be a case of atavistic resurgence: in him, traits would be reproduced that were normal, or at least common, in primitive man and even in pre-human animals. Thus, from time to time, from ordinary parents, an irrational, amoral and violent pithecanthrope would be born, for whom the tendency towards plunder and rape would be as natural and as irresistible as it was for the prehistoric cave-dweller. The phenomenon fits perfectly with the laws of heredity, but the calculation of probabilities governing the combination of genes makes it highly exceptional. Regressive criminals are born just as human monsters with fish tails are born. In reality, the category of born criminals far exceeds the Lombrosian biotype. It includes all vigorous unbalanced individuals, that is to say, all those in whom a natural tendency asserts itself with excessive and uncontrollable dynamism, and all those whose social instinct is weakened due to a deficiency in their hereditary endowment and, in particular, due to acquired and transmitted antisocial traits. Anthropology is familiar with well-studied lineages of criminals, and bad example alone is not sufficient to explain criminal specialisation. As in any other field, the function – in this case pathological – both attracts and shapes individuals with certain characteristics (see Paragraph 110).

Lombroso's 'regressive criminal' is, therefore, nothing more than one of the types of 'born criminals', that is, individuals predisposed by hereditary factors

prone to committing certain crimes. There is not a single criminal biotype but several, and anyone with even a passing knowledge of the subject knows that the swindler differs biopsychologically from the mugger. This is due not only to the specific demands of each type of crime but also, where applicable, to the inheritance of corresponding acquired traits. Racial factors may come into play in this field. Jews and Gypsies are characterised by high rates of crime. Yet usury, so common amongst the former, is unknown amongst the latter, whilst violent crimes, frequent amongst the latter, do not feature in the statistics relating to the other ethnic minority.

219. Social factors in crime: individualism.

To speak of the hereditary factors in criminality does not in any way imply denying, or even downplaying, the direct influence of the social environment on the phenomenon. The individual does, in fact, inherit certain predispositions from their ancestors, from which they make choices throughout their life in order to adapt as best they can to themselves and to the outside world. For some antisocial individuals, crime constitutes the most effective means of adapting to their own nature precisely because they are pathological misfits. But the vast majority of offenders are normal individuals who seek to find their place within their social framework and fail to do so in certain circumstances, whether due to an accidental failure in their personal process of self-affirmation, or because the environment encourages the manifestation of socially negative tendencies within them. In a well-structured society, the individual is firmly embedded within the groups and communities of which they form part, and outside of which they have no possibility of fully realising themselves. Their very self-interest therefore leads them to act in a socially functional manner, and stable, generally accepted norms of coexistence encourage them to do so. However, since the late 18th century, social structures have been disintegrating. The prevailing ideology has proclaimed the primacy of the individual and has made absolute freedom the source of all collective life. On the one hand, then, a loosening of the social framework; on the other, the exaltation of the individual. The individual becomes the sole judge of his own actions, and it will be difficult to make him believe that his decisions have no validity in themselves, that they seek only to express the General Will and that, consequently, they must be subordinated to it in the event of conflict. Rousseau's sophisms may be useful to the 'democratic' ruler and appealing to the dreamer: they will not convince anyone who regards themselves as a minor deity and has a strong enough interest to violate a necessary norm of social life. Egalitarian individualism thus fosters a return to the law of the jungle. To the extent that it prevails, every individual becomes a potential criminal. Only prudence or incapacity can stop them.

This is why liberal countries have a much higher crime rate than those that have managed to preserve or restore the morphological and psychosocial structures essential for their citizens to make the right choices regarding their individual opportunities for fulfilment. Neither puritanical morality nor

a particularly effective police force prevent the most individualistic society of our time – the United States – from having the highest crime rate in the world. It is instructive in this regard to compare figures for the Spanish prison population: in 1935, the last normal year of the Republic, there were 139.75 prisoners per
100,000 inhabitants; in 1963, twenty-five years after the end of the Civil War, 36.66. This reduction is certainly not due to less repression but to a lower level of crime: in 1935 there were 1.2 homicide deaths per 100,000 inhabitants in Spain; in 1962 only 0.3 [22].

220. Social factors in crime: capitalism.

Capitalism—the end result and consequence of egalitarian individualism, that is to say, the subjugation and exploitation of wage-earning producers by the owners of the means of production—has contributed significantly to rising crime rates. Based on usury and the hoarding of the fruits of others' labour, the system effectively legalises the most flagrant violations of natural law and makes well-being and power dependent on acts which, outside of it, would be severely punished. Of course, such crimes do not appear in the statistics, since the law does not recognise them. But, regardless of the fact that it is a criminal regime by its very nature, capitalism fosters a form of indirect criminality that is partly reflected in the official figures. Only partly, however, since the crimes committed—even outside the law—by the beneficiaries of the system and by the holders of political power themselves—embezzlement in all its forms—generally escape the repression intended exclusively for the poor.

Such indirect criminality stems from the basic principle of the capitalist system. Indeed, once profit becomes the supreme value of social development and personal conduct, and certain forms of theft are accepted and encouraged as a means of obtaining it, it follows logically that some individuals will regard illegal means of a similar nature as permissible. The bourgeoisie seized control of the state in order to practise usury with impunity and enrich itself at the expense of the producers. The phenomenon would have been identical, from the point of view that concerns us, if highwaymen had seized power in order to carry out their criminal activities safely and on a larger scale. Why prohibit the latter from doing what is permitted to the former? Unacceptable forms of profit become tempting and even find certain moral justifications, since their prohibition clearly stems from a mere desire for oligopolistic protection. If this were not the case, how can one explain that quackery is punished but not psychoanalysis, which is far more dangerous; the sale of cannabis but not that of cigarettes; the trade in narcotics but not that of a certain fizzy drink that is habit-forming; or the lottery and roulette, provided they are not run by the State itself? Where does lending at interest end and legally sanctioned usury begin? Where is the line between speculation and 'free com-

22)- See **España* hoy*, Ministry of Information and Tourism, Madrid, 1964.

"crime"? It is only natural that such a farce, which conceals the law of the richest, should give rise, whether by reaction or by default, to every conceivable form of crime.

On the other hand, capitalism, by carefully maintaining a 'pool of unemployed' to stifle trade union demands, induces in its victims a state of need that may lead them to resort to reprehensible means to obtain what this pathological society denies them. It is hardly surprising, under such conditions, that they may even overstep the mark and go beyond the legitimate defence of their natural rights. For one easily becomes accustomed to breaking the law, and natural needs are not defined in any code or catechism.

221. Organised crime: the underworld.

So far, we have spoken of the offender as the sole perpetrator of a socially harmful act and of crime as an individual act. However, this analysis does not capture all aspects of the problem. For whilst it is true that the occasional offender acts in isolation or, in other words, as a member of a purely circumstantial group and is therefore of no social significance, it is also true that professional criminals often form permanent gangs, that is to say, genuine associations, with the corresponding internal hierarchy. There is nothing new here for us (see Paragraph 52), except for the object of collective action. Nor is it even easy, in the capitalist world, to distinguish gangs engaged in economic and financial crime from legally constituted companies, operating within the pathological norms of the system, with the same aim. A distinction which, on the other hand, is of no interest to the sociologist.

The situation is quite different for gangs specialising in certain types of crime that do not benefit in any way from the protection of the law: robbery proper (that is to say, excluding petty theft, with which it is often confused in common parlance), pimping, drug trafficking, smuggling, etc. Such associations are, in effect, de facto federated into intermediate communities of varying degrees, the collective of which constitutes the underworld. The underworld, not being subject—by virtue of its illegal nature—to the unifying action of the State, functions as a veritable autonomous community within the social body. It has its leaders, its customary laws, its ethical norms, its language, its police force and its foreign relations service. Within it, solidarity normally prevails over rivalries of interest and power, though not without conflicts that are sometimes bloody.

The underworld exists in a state of perpetual war with the community in which it operates as a parasitic element: armed conflict with the police, legal battles with the courts and, on more than one occasion, a cold war with the State, in which influences of all kinds intervene on its behalf. It avoids, as far as possible, direct confrontation, as its gunmen are not in a position to effectively oppose the forces of repression. But the money at its disposal allows it to buy consciences, both through outright bribery and, in

democratic countries, through their effective participation in electoral contests. It thus becomes a genuine pressure group (see Paragraph 183) that is pathological in its very nature. It manages to infiltrate the state that is fighting it, placing police officers, judges, mayors and even ministers under its control. The best-known example of such a situation is provided by the United States during the Prohibition era. But it is by no means the only one. The influence of the underworld can only be prevented by a properly structured community. That is why it increases, like other factors of disorder and crime itself, when the State loses its authority.

222. Prevention and repression.

A pathological phenomenon stemming from a natural antisocial tendency which, in some individuals, abnormally suppresses their social instinct for one reason or another, whilst in others it surfaces accidentally; crime constitutes a powerful factor of disintegration and, therefore, cannot be tolerated, let alone encouraged. The logical approach for the authorities is to prevent it as far as possible, which presupposes, first and foremost, the proper organisation of the community—that is, the absence of any structure or superstructure that authorises or provokes violations of the necessary rules of coexistence. We already know that the loosening of social norms (see Paragraph 219) and the legal exploitation of man by man (see Paragraph 220) constitute causes of crime. The promotion by the media of man's antisocial tendencies and the very disruption of his mind (see Chapter XX) also have a similar effect. Cinema and, above all, television are today veritable schools of criminality. The best form of crime prevention is, obviously, the elimination of its organic and psychosocial causes. Only in second place, and at a considerable distance, comes the threat of punishment.

Even in the best-organised society from every point of view, it is impossible to imagine completely eradicating crime. Faced with a fait accompli, repression is therefore necessary. It is not a question, despite the teachings of this or that school of legal thought, of applying the law of retaliation to the offender – for society gains nothing by taking revenge – but of preventing the guilty individual from continuing to pose a danger to social order. The punishment, which in any case will satisfactorily fulfil its subsidiary role as a deterrent, need not therefore be measured so much by the gravity of the offence as by the future danger posed by the offender. From this perspective, those who violate the rules necessary for coexistence can be divided into four categories: occasional offenders – acting out of recklessness or passion –, primary antisocial offenders – who are presumed capable of rehabilitation –, repeat offenders, and incurable psychopathological offenders. For the first group, punishment is justified solely by its exemplary effect on others. For the second group, rather than punishment, re-education is required, for which prison as we know it is the least suitable setting. For the others, the only option is to determine the most appropriate means of

Means of elimination: death, regarded not as a punishment but as a mere technical procedure of social prophylaxis, or life-long forced labour.

The mere mention of these rules is enough to clearly demonstrate that our criminal law constitutes a pathological superstructure, which is moreover incoherent, since on the one hand it essentially measures punishment according to the seriousness of the offence – a remnant of the law of retaliation – whilst on the other it is influenced by the sentimentality of an individualistic and egalitarian humanitarianism that lacks any social meaning. As for our prison system, it is nothing more than an effective school of crime and exacerbates the very evil it is supposed to cure.

XXII DECLINE AND DEGENERATION

223. Decadence.

It is an observable fact that communities are born, grow, age and die just like individual beings. History and archaeology provide us with countless examples of this phenomenon. Magnificent civilisations, unknown until now, emerge from the sands. Empires that ruled entire continents for centuries have sunk into chaos. Nations that were once powerful and feared now languish in mediocrity and no longer count for anything in the political life of the world. This means that, at a certain point, the sinusoidal curve representing the historical evolution (see Paragraph *132)* of a community shows periods of relaxation that are longer and more pronounced than the periods of tension with which they alternate. The result becomes negative and thus signals a process of decline, that is to say, a growing loss of power, which will end with the disappearance of the social entity in question, its stabilisation at a lower level or, more exceptionally, its recovery through a reversal of the trend.

Under such circumstances, it is obvious that decline is essentially a relative process. When studying the decline in social vitality, we have no standard that can serve as a measuring tool or even as a basis for comparison. A community cannot be considered to be in a state – or, rather, in a process – of decline except in relation to the level it had previously attained. It is often said that a social group is in decline when it shows signs of a certain apathy, is not combative, or does not seek to expand. Such a way of speaking is only correct when referring to a Community that has previously demonstrated a conquering dynamism. There are social groups that have never shown the slightest spirit of conquest, or even of defence, or which, at the very least, have been stable for some time. Each community therefore has its own curve of evolution, and it would be futile to seek a common criterion for phenomena that are essentially self-referential.

Observation and historical analysis show us that communities are just as diverse as individuals. Some have managed to establish an effective political organisation, create an incomparable civilisation and assert their power across time and space. Others have been content with a rudimentary structure, producing neither theology, nor philosophy, nor science, nor literature, and/or have allowed themselves to be conquered or destroyed with almost no resistance. Of course, these are extreme cases. Generally speaking, even when using the criterion of creative power, comparing communities—as with ethnic groups—is no easy task, and the results are not always indisputable. Yet there is never a shortage of positive criteria that allow us to determine whether a community is on the path to self-affirmation or whether it is gradually abandoning the positions it had previously attained, allowing itself to be carried along by the historical current rather than shaping it.

224. Organic decline.

Our analysis of the previous chapters of this book shows us that the causes of decline are manifold but ultimately boil down to the denial of the Community's vital needs. There is a natural order that responds to the structural and superstructural needs of any human community. Its destruction, or even merely its pathological alteration, will therefore lead to a decline in power, just as the injury of an organ reduces the capabilities of a living body.

If the unity, stability and continuity of the family are undermined by divorce; if the assets that form its material foundation are fragmented by the abolition of primogeniture and the compulsory division of the estate; if feminism calls into question its biopsychic hierarchy; or if paternal authority is denied or obstructed, the Community loses its 'cellular health' and disintegrates. If the enterprise, instead of constituting a united group engaged in common work, is divided by class struggle; if its hierarchy, founded on the very needs of production, is disrupted by the influence of a parasitic element or by co-management; or if its autonomy disappears under the domination of capital, then economic and social disorder undermines the indispensable foundations of the organic structure of the whole in question. If intermediate communities lose their privileges and become disjointed, if ethnic groups are destroyed by miscegenation, or if religious communities sink into intellectual and moral anarchy, the Community gradually transforms into a herd. Disorganisation, in the etymological sense of the word, deprives it of some of the structural conditions that are indispensable for its development and affirmation and, at times, for its very existence.

What are the causes of such ailments within social groups and intermediate communities? They are as varied as the groups and communities in question, and their respective degrees of susceptibility to the influence of external factors. Disorder within the family is always biosocial, just as its order is. But the biological structure of the group is sensitive to the moral laxity of its members (egalitarianism, licentiousness, homosexuality or hedonism), to the absence

economic factors (the destruction of their assets or the inadequacy of their means of livelihood) and the individualism inherent in the law. In business, disorder is always of an economic nature, but it is influenced by the exploitation of man by man and by political and social propaganda. Conversely, the structural breakdown of social groups and intermediate communities leads to a relaxation of individual discipline amongst their members, which we shall analyse later (see Paragraph 226). There is, therefore, an interdependence between the social framework and its human 'raw material'. In vain do sociologists argue endlessly over whether it is institutions that corrupt individuals or whether individuals get the institutions they deserve. Both propositions are equally true. Man is social by nature, but society is human. Social order and the worth of the individual are two interactive factors of the same reality.

225. Political decline.

Structural disintegration has direct repercussions on the political organisation of the Community. If, for example, the families that constitute an aristocratic ruling class lose their material resources—that is to say, their economic independence—and if the abolition of primogeniture undermines their hierarchical order, the State gradually loses its source of manpower. If, in general, the people become a mass, political authority must adapt to these new conditions: obedience will be achieved exclusively through physical and/or psychosocial coercion. On the other hand, the organic structure of the Community depends, in part, on the State. In a social context where there is a tendency towards the disintegration of the family, it is not irrelevant whether legislation supports or combats this, just as it is not irrelevant whether the power of the governing body serves the capitalist system of production or seeks to re-establish, in this sphere, the natural order. Despite our intention not to address in this work the issues pertaining to political science, we cannot, therefore, exclude from our analysis the political causes of social decline. The State is, in fact, a factor in both disorder and organic order, and its action in the field of structures varies according to its regime. On the other hand, the governing body of the Community has its own functions, which it performs more or less satisfactorily depending on its awareness of reality and its guiding intent, but also on the means of action at its disposal. It must be aware of existing problems and wish to resolve them, but it must also be able to do so, which presupposes an adequate organisation. If the head of state has only limited authority and if the manner of his appointment periodically disrupts the continuity of leadership, he lacks the effectiveness guaranteed by strong and permanent power.

When the structure of the state fails to meet the functional requirements of political leadership, it therefore constitutes a factor in its decline. A regime is not merely bad because of its corruption, but also, and above all, because of its structural unsuitability for the task of governance. Hence, political disorder is

cause of decline: because of its impact on the internal structures of the Community and because of the weakening of the governing body on which the very life of the social organism depends.

226. Qualitative decline.

Structures can never be considered in isolation from the human 'raw material' of the social body. They therefore have a qualitative dimension, and a coefficient of human effectiveness is added to their coefficient of functional effectiveness. In a well-organised Community, as we already know (see Paragraph 104), the *creators* are grouped in the two upper structural layers, the second of which is complemented by a selection of *implementers,* whilst the remainder of the latter form the backbone of the intermediate communities. Between the organic structure and the qualitative stratification there is, therefore, an optimal relationship, which is one of the requirements of social order.

It is easy to see, under these circumstances, that a change in this relationship is the cause of a form of social decline that we might call 'qualitative', although this does not necessarily entail a loss of human value on the part of the community, but rather, always, a mismatch between the qualities of individuals and the roles they perform. If a subversive movement removes the *creators* from the ruling class and forces them to isolate themselves as 'internal emigrants' or to mix with members of the lower classes, the qualitative stratification of the Community does not change, at least until functional degeneration (see Paragraph 230) has occurred. Statistics always give us an identical numerical and qualitative breakdown of the population. However, the social position of the various strata changes profoundly: there is no longer any correspondence between ability and function. Power is in the hands of mediocrities and the social body loses its dynamism.

A phenomenon with identical consequences occurs if the ruling minority—typically composed of *creators*—decays, whilst new values emerge from the people without being accorded their rightful place. On the other hand, upward replacement is far from automatic. *Creators* may simply disappear, through violent elimination or bio-psychic degeneration, without others coming to the fore. In either case, the ruling minority loses its qualitative suitability for its natural functions.

At the other end of the social spectrum, capitalist mechanisation has led to the emergence and development of the proletariat, a class originally made up of artisans and peasants—that is to say, of those who assimilate the 'executing' hierarchy and, in the case of the former, the 'creative' one. But the living and working conditions imposed on the working class have 'brutalised' its members and led to the formation of an intermediate qualitative stratum between the *assimilators* and the *brutes* incapable of any development. In the latter case, we are faced with a complex chain of causes and effects. For the qualitative decline of

The Community stems from a decline in the value of part of its 'raw material', but this decline arises from a structural disorder which, in turn, has its origin in a political reality: the pathological occupation of the State by the bourgeoisie. Furthermore, the qualitative decline in question has repercussions on the Community's organic-political organisation by producing a human inadequacy to structural demands, to which the functional capacity of the proletariat no longer responds.

227. Structural stages of decline.

Decadence is, therefore, the product of disorder within social structures, considered in both their organic and political aspects and with their qualitative character. Or, more precisely, this disorder constitutes the static condition of decadence, just as order represents the static condition of the highest form of communal affirmation. For we already know (see Chapter XIII) that social reality – the very term 'decadence' indicates this – is essentially dynamic. But this shifting reality demands an organisation that endures through evolution, even as it evolves by virtue of being part of the changing social entity. Likewise, the living body is constantly transforming: it is only insofar as it endures. It possesses, however, an organically and neurologically stable structure, albeit one subject to qualitative modifications corresponding to what we call illness and health.

Having said this, we are able to distinguish the stages of social decline. The starting point is the communal order: basic groups possess a solid organisation and, consequently, a solid hierarchy, both within and between them. However, little by little, the organic-political structures begin to break down: the conditions for social health gradually disappear. The community loses power whilst qualitative stratification persists but ceases to be underpinned by the organic fabric. This is the stage of personalities, which stand out all the more because no collective assertion comes to dim their brilliance and no functional obligation hinders their expansion. However, human beings are social by nature and their individual development requires a communal framework; function, moreover, is a powerful factor in formation and fulfilment. Strong personalities may survive a strong Community; they can only exceptionally emerge from a weakened Community. Then comes the stage of mediocrity. The community has no choice but to disappear or vegetate until another vigorous social group brings it to an end. It goes without saying that the stages of decline we have just defined are merely cross-sections that the analyst makes in a continuous evolution, the dynamism of which constitutes the essence of the process.

228. Structural decline and evolutionary decline.

Social structures are not, in reality, the static framework of evolution, but rather evolution itself considered in terms of its constants, without which there would be no

duration. Its permanence is, therefore, essentially relative to historical dynamism: it exists only to the extent that the Community remains true to itself. But all evolution is a more or less marked change in a being that adapts to circumstances in order to remain true to its essence. Structures are gradually transformed according to the needs of community life. They are the shifting substrate of social continuity. Yet they respond to the specific demands of intermediate communities, social groups and, ultimately, individuals.

Thus, the Community is constituted, in terms of its 'raw material', by sexual beings between whom there exist biopsychic relationships that are fundamentally immutable, and which impose upon the family group a structure that is no less unchanging in its essence. But this group, although always based on the union of man and woman with a view to procreation, may, depending on historical demands, take on variable forms (see Paragraphs 42 to 44), sometimes pathological ones (see Paragraph 175). The rhythm of the family's duration and, consequently, its power depend not only on the immutable basis of its structure but also on its changing form. Hence, the duration of the community, which is partly made up of family rhythms—overcome but always present—suffers the backlash of every transformation. This analysis applies, of course, to all social groups and intermediate communities.

The decline of organic structures is thus accompanied by a loosening of communal cohesion, that is to say, a process of evolutionary decline. The same applies, all the more so, to political structures. If the State, as a group, finds institutions imposed upon it that prevent it from performing its specific functions, and if synthesis does not take place or is insufficient, historical continuity loses its unity, its continuity and its vigour: it enters into decline. But, in turn, the State's incapacity affects the constituent elements of the Community and causes a decline in its vital forces, thereby progressively depriving the governing body of the social body of the dynamic raw material for the synthesis it is meant to achieve. Faced with the downward spiral caused by these interactions, it is futile to seek whether responsibility for the process lies with the State or with the rest of the Community. An organicist comparison takes on its full analogical meaning here: the State behaves like the brain, whose functioning depends on the life of the body as a whole but which gives that life its very existence. There is absolute interdependence between the State and the Community of which it forms part. This is why the revolutionary crisis, an expression of decline, stems from a functional rupture between the governing body of the Community and that same Community considered in its poly-dialectical evolution.

The revolution, which cannot be analysed in these pages [23] due to its political nature, marks the culmination – the arrival and end – of the process of decline. Through the restoration of its State, the Community brutally renounces what it believed to be its destiny in order to realise its rediscovered true guiding purpose. It thus rediscovers its essence and vitality. But it is evident that the revolution can bring forth only what exists in the forgotten yet effective reality of social evolution. It is not a creator but a revealer of forces. That is why not every process of decline necessarily leads to a salvific change. The downward curve revealing the Community's structural and dynamic disorder may also signify its degeneration.

229. Decline and degeneration: their interdependence,

We are already aware (see paragraph 226*) that* the relationship between structure and function influences social evolution*, namely* the degree to which this function corresponds to the innate endowment of the individual performing it. From this perspective, decline may therefore result from a mismatch between the individual and the function, due to a failure in the system for assigning roles. But it may also stem from the degeneration of the members of the Community, that is, from the decline in their biopsychic potential. In the first case, the suitable individual exists but is misplaced. In the second, it is not possible to find such a person.

Whether it is the desire for pleasure or, conversely, an excess of religious vocations that leads to the relative sterility of the ruling class—that is to say, a quantitative degeneration of the community hierarchy—or whether alcoholism brings about a qualitative degeneration of the 'raw material' of this or that section of society, decline inevitably ensues: the necessary functions are no longer performed by individuals as capable as before. The same occurs if a change in climate leads to a reduction in the population's biopsychic vitality, or if a change in lifestyle—for example, as a consequence of mechanisation—removes man from his natural conditions of existence. Theoretically, and barring uncontrollable physical causes, it is the State's responsibility to intervene to halt and reverse the process of degeneration. But there are circumstances more powerful than even the most authoritarian State. It is inconceivable, nowadays, that a government would ban the use of the car on account of the undeniable harmful effects this mode of transport has on the health of city dwellers, or that it would impose a return to the artisanal system of production to rescue the proletariat from the unhealthy environment that even the best-organised factory constitutes. On the other hand, even the most capable statesmen generally do not realise the degenerative consequences of a phenomenon until they have already manifested themselves, that is, when the degeneration has already had time to produce its first—

[23])- See Mahieu, Jaime María de, **El Estado comunitario**, Ed. Arayú, Buenos Aires, 1962.

further effects of decline, thereby stripping the State of its power. This is a tragic vicious circle, and not the only one.

Indeed, decline, whether stemming from a biopsychic degeneration or arising from mere dynamic-structural causes, brings about, as we shall see later (Paragraph 230), the degeneration of a 'raw material' that no longer finds the organic-political conditions for its realisation. Decline and degeneration are interdependent. This is why the downward trajectory of a Community is so difficult to reverse.

230. Degeneration due to ethnic and biopsychic variations.

The degeneration resulting from a change in the ethnic composition of the Community perfectly illustrates the thesis we have just put forward. Let us consider a social group whose members belong to a homogeneous race but are gradually intermingling with inferior elements. Mixed-race individuals no longer possess the potential of their predecessors. The qualitative stratification of the Community is altered: the *creators* disappear, the proportion of *achievers* diminishes and the *brutish* multiply. There are increasingly numerous cases in which social functions are entrusted to the relatively incompetent. But what are the causes of miscegenation? Either it is a process of individual origin: brought into contact with an inferior race as a result of some historical event, the members of the group in question succumb to sexual attraction. Hence the cycle of degeneration-decline-degeneration. Or else miscegenation occurs due to the breakdown of a polyethnic structure in which each race had a place and function determined by its relative value. It is, then, the consequence of the weakening of the barriers that established an organic-political order between the two races. Here we have the cycle of decadence-degeneration-decadence. In any case, the fact remains that miscegenation produces the degeneration of the 'raw material' of social duration, a phenomenon from which there will never be a return.

Instead, one might consider halting a process of biopsychic degeneration and restoring the qualitative order and dynamism of the temporarily diminished Community. To achieve this, it suffices to restore man to the organic-political conditions of his full realisation, to place him back in the environment that is indispensable to him, or to impose upon him the way of life that best enables him to develop his hereditary potential. This is something which, at least in theory, a revolutionary State—that is to say, one freed from all dependence on degenerate social forces—can achieve. Provided, of course, that there remains within the Community – or joins it – a group of vigorous elements charged with restoring to the State, by becoming part of it, the intention and power necessary to carry out the indispensable restoration.

It is above all with regard to the functional inadequacy of individuals and lineages that the State can act effectively, and this is the most powerful factor in the

biopsychic degeneration. We saw earlier (Paragraph 110) that the function attracts and consequently selects those beings who possess the type corresponding to its needs; yet, on the other hand, the unsuitable type adapts to the function and is modified under its influence. Conversely, functional disorder acts negatively upon the hereditary endowment of individuals who, being ill-placed, lose the organic-political capacity acquired through hereditary specialisation, as well as the corresponding personal qualities. The qualitative stratification of the Community is erased and gives way to the herd. Undoubtedly, the function would, in the long run, shape the unsuitable individual to whom it was entrusted, provided that a hereditary functional attribution took place and was not limited to a single individual's lifetime. Egalitarianism and the mandarinate (see Paragraph 190) prevent this from working effectively and impose upon each generation a return to square one that destroys all specialisation.

231. Degeneration resulting from the absence of natural selection.

The contemporary world is determined to eliminate the numerous remnants of a previous form of organisation based on the natural realities of biopsychic stratification, and to prevent, as far as possible, any return, in one form or another, to the natural order. Not only has an economic differentiation that confuses all values largely replaced the indispensable functional differentiation, but natural selection itself has been largely nullified. The distinctive characteristics of the various human elements of the Community possess a qualitative degree of paramount importance. This degree may deteriorate, as we have seen (Paragraph 229), as a consequence of widespread individual degeneration. But, regardless of this phenomenon, the fact remains that, at a given historical moment, individuals are unequal, not only because of their hereditary endowment but also because of the qualitative level—whether essential or accidental—of their genetic characteristics. Some, within the prosperous and healthy Community, are undernourished, alcoholic, syphilitic or simply weak for one reason or another.

Under primitive conditions of existence – which does not mean in a state of savagery, but rather in accordance with the fundamental laws of biology – the weak and the mentally deficient disappear before they can reproduce. The genetic heritage of the community therefore automatically eliminates some of its potential factors of degeneration. Our so-called civilisation, on the contrary, strives to create artificial conditions that allow the survival of individuals who in other times would have disappeared. Criminals and the insane are confined, with no intention of punishment in the latter case, but hospitals are created to allow the degenerate to survive and pass on to their offspring the genes that are the cause of their tragic inferiority. The creation of a line of the deficient is, however, more serious for both the victims and the Community than crime, which merely takes a life.

Generally speaking, the principle of social defence in this field—that is to say, the deliberate and, to some extent, artificial restoration of natural selection—is now rejected. It is opposed by the 'rights of the human person', yet no one speaks out against mental asylums or prisons, or even, in many cases, against the electric chair or the guillotine. Perhaps it would be worth considering the natural right of every child born to possess their bio-psychic integrity, and the no less natural right of the Community to protect its genetic heritage from the elements that corrupt it, and thus to defend itself against the degeneration that is gradually destroying it.

232. The ageing of communities.

We are now able to grasp the life cycle of the Community in all its aspects, with its periods of tension and relaxation: tension that is always an affirmation of its historical existence in the face of the internal and external conditions of its development; relaxation that signifies either a normal rest following exertion or a pathological process within the social body. In the latter case, the Community sometimes recovers and reacts against its momentary decline in a surge of all its revitalised energies. At other times, however, it seems to accept its fate or to lack the strength within itself to effectively reverse the course of its evolution. We then say that it has degenerated, that its human 'raw material' has been irreparably affected by the forces of decline and has lost the essential quality required for any recovery.

All this is quite clear. Communities, like living beings, suffer from degenerative diseases that may or may not be incurable, depending on their virulence and the 'patient's' ability to fight back. More surprising is the phenomenon that observers refer to, by analogy with biology, as the ageing of communities. We see, in fact, that certain social groups whose institutions are no worse than others—if not better—and whose 'raw material' has remained healthy, have lost their former vitality, that is to say, the capacity they once had to focus on the fulfilment of their historical purpose. Such a European nation, with a numerically insignificant population and a meagre territory, was able, over the course of glorious centuries, to conquer an empire, to oppose the world's most powerful navies at sea, and to give our civilisation some of its greatest artists. Today, it does nothing but survive, in a pitiful state of mediocrity. It constitutes, however, a relatively united Community whose degeneration has no structural or biopsychic causes beyond those common to all of Western Europe. In contrast, we have the example of a community on the New World, populated largely by the descendants of the biopsychic remnants of immigrant origins, undermined by its ethnic heterogeneity and held back by its political institutions, which asserts itself as one of the two great world powers.

We say that the first of these nations is old and the second is young. When it comes to individuals, the meaning of these two words is clear. It is

A young person is one whose future holds the greatest potential, that is to say, one whose being consists more of potential than of history. Exactly the same applies to the social order. It is not the recently formed community that is young, but rather the one that has evolved little, whose living conditions have remained simple and constant, and which has had no need to realise most of its potential. Conversely, a community is old when its structures and superstructures, ossified by a long historical existence, hinder its capacity for adaptation. Given equal potential, a primitive people—that is to say, one that is not highly differentiated—is better able to assert itself when circumstances demand profound transformation than a highly developed community.

The rejuvenation of a social group is possible but difficult to achieve. It entails, in effect, both the rejection of oppressive tradition—even in its valid aspects—and the rediscovery, within history, and one might almost say *beneath* history, of the guiding principle that expresses the authentic and, to some extent, primitive nature of the Community. It therefore demands a heroic renunciation of the present—which is easy because it is routine, yet not without value—and a lucid awareness of the future, to be tragically created through renewed effort. Only exceptionally are the revolutionary forces indispensable for such a reaffirmation to be found in a community content with its own degeneration.

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